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ABSTRACT

The local-language-medium schools of North Solomons Province are described and evaluated. The Viles Tok Ples Skuls (VTPS) provide education in both the indigenous languages (tok ples) and English as a means of integrating the past with modern development, as is preferred by the local people. The report contains seven chapters. The first gives the history of educational language policy in the North Solomons and the background of the VTPS plan. The second reviews research on similar programs conducted in other parts of the world and evaluates VTPS in the light of its stated overall goals. Chapters 3 through 5 give a formative assessment of aspects of the program's operations: its relationship to the community, issues related to classroom instruction, and the program's administration. Chapter 6 discusses expansion funding and future planning for other schools giving instruction to all language groups, in approximately 20 languages and over 40 dialects. The final chapter summarizes the findings. (MSE)

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# AN EVALUATION OF THE VILES TOK PLES SKUL SCHEME IN THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE

ERU REPORT NO. 51

University of Papua New Guinea

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# ABSTRACT

The North Solomons Viles Tok Ples Skuls (VTPS) - local language medium schools - began in 1980 as a pilot project. Two year later this evaluation was made for the provincial government, based on extensive observation of schools in their community context and of the administration of the scheme. It starts by clarifying the historical background of VTPS, followed by an evaluation of the success of the project in meeting its original goals and suggestions for strengthening its performance. A plan for introducing VTPS to all language groups in the province (approximately 20 languages and more than 40 dialects) over 40 years is proposed together with alternatives for financing this expansion.

The research indicates that North Solomons people want their children educated both in their indigenous languages (tok ples) and English as a means of integrating the past with modern developments. The VTPS scheme combines a number or parents' expressed aspirations for their children. These include: pre-schooling with entry to primary education in English delayed by two years, literacy in their own languages, and their children's initial education grounded in their own social and cultural heritage.

The overall findings of the evaluation indicate that VTPS is a viable programme which has gone a long way towards meeting its stated goals, and has enhanced the quality of life in rural communities. Children attending enjoy a distinct educational advantage.

Children spend two years in VTPS taught by local community members, the majority of whom are Grade 6 leavers with several months of basic training. VTPS classrooms were found generally to be more lively and enthusiastic than is common in other educational institutions, with teachers performing comparably with community school teachers and sometimes more effectively. The tok ples writing of children in several Buin schools was found to be comparable with advanced Grade 1 and 2 pupils in the United States. Their literacy skills also appear to transfer to English and Tok Pisin.

Parents and Grade 1 teachers were found to have positive perceptions of the social and educational benefits of VTPS, of children's alertness and responsiveness to school learning, and of the value of maintaining their tok ples. VTPS teachers felt job satisfaction and status. The backing for VTPS by community members, whose aspirations were used to guide the establishment of the scheme, is seen as providing an important lesson for educational innovation and reform.

Suggestions are made for improving the training and supervision of teachers, and enhancing the role of VTPS staff and community governments. Key recommendations include the provision of transport to enable more supervision of teachers, the encouragement of local committees to develop cultural studies, and the further development of tok ples literacy in community schools as a high priority.

ERU REPORT NO. 51

# AN EVALUATION OF THE VILES TOK PLES SKUL SCHEME IN THE NORTH SOLOMONS PROVINCE

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# PREFACE

The evaluation of the North Solomons Viles Tok Ples Skul (VTPS) scheme which is contained in this report was carried out under the auspices of the North Solomons Education Research Project (NSERP). Its primary purpose is to provide concrete evidence for the North Solomons Provincial Government as well as national policy-makers as to the viability and progress of the scheme. Is it really working effectively in practice? How successful has it been in meeting its stated goals? How could it be improved?

The NSERP began as a unique joint venture between the University of Papua New Guinea's Educational Research Unit and the North Solomons Provincial Government. It was set up on the initiative of the Provincial Planner at the end of 1978, in response to community pressure in the North Solomons for an education system more responsive to people's aspirations. The VTPS scheme is one of a number of educational innovations in the province which have resulted from the project, at all levels from pre-school to adult education.

A notable feature of this action research project has been the determination to combine research, implementation and evaluation within the one project, reflecting the bold initial judgement of the provincial planning section and successive provincial education ministers. This meant that proposals arising out of the research were not left to gather dust on shelves, but were able to be rapidly put into action on a trial basis, and then evaluated to see how effectively they were progressing. It also enabled a thorough examination of the planning and budgeting implications of proposals to be built into their implementation at an early stage.

There were two further valuable outcomes of this integrated approach to research and development. Firstly, parents and community members who were interviewed and consulted (initially in 1979) did not have to wait long to see the government taking selective action on their requests and observations. They were thus able to feel genuinely consulted and not simply used as part of an academic exercise. The support they have since given to innovations such as the VTPS programme bears out the value of such an approach. Secondly, such an approach has led to consistency and continuity in developing new programmes, because research personnel with first-hand knowledge of community feeling, and of the deliberations which led to the original project proposals, have been involved in implementing them.

This manner of proceeding, however, raises certain problems for the evaluation of new schemes such as VTPS. The researcher who is involved not only in background research, but also in implementing the policy recommendations arising out of the research findings, is likely to be closely identified with the new programme as it develops. As Coordinator of the NSERP, I had responsibility not only for leading the research team, but also for supervising the early stages of implementation of the VTPS programme from 1978 to 1981, and altogether had nearly five years involvement with it.

Such a deep involvement with a project has advantages and disadvantages for a researcher. One evident advantage is the knowledge which is gathered over a period of years of all the practical realities of the project in action: what 'really happened' behind the scenes in particular schools and communities or at headquarters, the personalities involved, the arguments and the difficulties which had to be faced. Nothing can replace this on-the-job familiarity in giving insight into the functioning of a project. But the reverse side of this coin reveals a disadvantage: because of such a close involvement, the researcher may 'will' the project to succeed, and come to paint a brighter picture of its achievements than is justified.

In order to ensure a fresh and relatively objective view of the scheme, the NSERP sought a visiting professional with appropriate qualifications to work as principal evaluator with the research coordinator, thus giving an initial balance of 'insider' and 'outsider' perspectives.

The project was indeed fortunate to gain the services of Lisa Delpit, who came from the Harvard Graduate School of Education on a year's doctoral fellowship. This enabled her to do intensive field work in the province, as well as to place her evaluation of this local scheme within a context of international research. She came to the project with a remarkable willingness to enter into the social and working environment of the communities and staff involved with the VTPS programme, and they in turn responded freely to her sympathetic approach.

The resulting document has taken several years to reach publication since the initial field work took place. It has proved very demanding in terms of further reflection, of making suitable recommendations, and of writing up and editing for publication. This has included a visit by myself to the United States to allow for further joint deliberation and writing with Lisa Delpit.

As the introduction which follows indicates, the chapters concerned with the overall evaluation of VTPS as an educational programme, and the review of research into related programmes around the world were authored by Lisa Delpit as principal researcher, and contain the findings of her field work in the province as well as extensive reading. The chapters on the historical background to the scheme, its future planning and expansion, and on administration and staff roles were written by myself. The final product, however, reflects agreement on the report as a whole by both of us.

It is sincerely hoped that the outcome will be of value to the provincial government in its educational decision-making, to the VTPS administrators and teachers in strengthening the scheme, and to national policy-makers and those interested in education in Papua New Guinea both here and in other countries.

Graeme Kemelfield
NSERP Coordinator
North Solomons University Centre
Arawa

28 February 1985

# ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This research would not have happened without the support of many individuals and groups. As principal researcher, I cannot hope to thank all of those who made it possible but I would like to express particular appreciation to former Premier Leo Hannet and the North Solomons Provincial Government for allowing me entry into the province; to Dr. Sheldon Weeks and the Educational Research Unit of the University of Papua New Guinea for allowing me to affiliate with their unit and through it with the North Solomons Education Research Project; and for all the assistance they provided in getting approved the documents necessary to get me into the country; and to Mr. Bernie Anderson and the national Department of Education for both its financial assistance and Mr. Anderson's original fortuitous pairing of my interests and the Village Tok Ples Skul (VTPS) programme in the North Solomons.

I would like in particular to thank the North Solomons Provincial Education Department, especially Mr. Stephen Lapan, then Assistant Secretary, for their continued moral support and their willingness to answer my numerous questions and allow me access to much of the information contained herein. Mr. Graeme Kemelfield welcomed me into the ongoing activities of the education research project. He took on the difficult responsibility of maintaining the flagging spirits of an American unused to the kind of logistical problems village-based research could entail, and managed as well to miraculously find solutions to most of them. I would like to thank Rachel Kaetavara, the VTPS Teacher Trainer and Levi Golu, the then VTPS Coordinator, for their assistance in helping me to learn about the programme and for the Kaetavara family's friendship and ever open hospitality. The Summer Institute of Linguistics was always ready to assist in whatever was requested of them, especially Ms. Margie Griffin, who by her own wonderful relationship with Buin residents, provided me an easy entree into that community.

Most significant of all to the success of the research, however, were the people in the villages themselves. Firstly, the two area supervisors, Mr. John Girana and Mr. Michael Nabui, introduced me to the schools and the teaching staff, helped me to learn about the people and the culture in Buin and Buka, and thankfully prevented me from making too many mistakes in my new environments. Secondly, the VTPS teachers were gracious enough to allow me into their classrooms and answer all of my time-consuming questions.

And finally, most important of all, the people of Buin and Buka, especially those in Hanahan, Maramuku, and Ipirai villages where I lived during the course of the research, opened both their homes and their hearts to me, and made me realize that for whatever surface difference might exist, people are basically the same all over, and family can extend across any national and cultural boundaries.

Thank you all.

Lisa D. Delpit
University of Alaska-Fairbanks

24 February 1985

# INTRODUCTION

The following paper is a result of a one-year study of the Viles Tok Ples Skul Scheme (a mother tongue medium instructional programme, literally: village mother tongue school scheme) of the North Solomons Province of Papua New Guinea. An evaluation study, much of it is the by-product of an ethnographically-based descriptive analysis of the VTPS scheme undertaken to complete the requirements of doctoral study at Harvard University in the United States of America. It is in no way an attempt to determine policy for the North Solomons Province, but rather a means to provide information to the provincial government through which its policymakers can more readily do so.

The study was conducted from February, 1982 to January, 1983. For the bulk of that time (five and a half months) as principal researcher I lived in villages in the Buka and Buin regions of the province where the tok ples schools are presently operating. (Two trial schools were also operating in the Haku area of Buka and in Kieta, but these were not investigated in this study). Although a larger percentage of time was originally planned for village-based activity, a series of problems - floods in Buin, droughts in Buka, food shortages in both, and various and sundry other occupational hazards of field research - shortened the expected field time. The remainder of the time was spent in the Tinputz Teacher Training Centre and in Arawa at the Education Office studying documents, interviewing individuals, and attending programme related meetings.

The research used four data collection vehicles - participant observation, formal and informal interview (see Appendix A for sample questionnaires), document study and analysis, and formal and informal testing.* These were used to investigate three general areas: the classroom, the community, and the programme administration. Stress was placed on the interaction of these three sectors - not only on what went on inside the classroom, but on how classroom activities affected community life, how what went on in the community affected the classroom, how the administration structure and performance affected and was affected by both, and so forth.

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*The research included approximately 100 interviews of VTPS personnel, parents and community members, community school personnel, village elders, provincial government administrators and political leaders; about 75 observations of VTPS classrooms; and six village-based meetings used as forums to express sentiments about VTPS.

The research plan called for intensive study of two schools in Buka and two in Buin, with day-long visits to as many other schools as possible. In Buka, I was able to visit 10 of the 12 VTPS schools (the exceptions being the two on Carterets Island). The two schools receiving more long-term study were at Hahalis and Hanahan villages, the latter being my place of residence for my stay in the Buka area.

Buin provided a much greater challenge to the goal of visiting all of the schools, a fact significant in the operation of the scheme in that area: bad roads and other transport problems (a stolen car and the lack of transport for the school inspector and the tok ples supervisor, chief among them) consequently necessitated a modification in the research plan. Instead of spending a brief time in all of the schools, more time was spent at fewer schools - a total of 8 out of the 20 operating schools in the area, representing four of the five community government areas. Those schools were located at Piliane, Masikuru, Laitaro, Ipirai, Maluoku, Mamaramino, Turiboiru, and Muuguai villages. Schools at Laitaro and Ipirai villages received the most intense study, the latter being my place of residence for half of my Buin stay, and Maramuku (a feeder village for the school at Turiboiru) my residence for the other half.

A Brief Word About the Communities Studied

When fieldwork for this evaluation was being carried out the VTPS programme was operating only in villages in the north and south of the province. Most village dwellers are engaged in subsistence agriculture, with some work on their own or others' cocoa or copra plantations to provide money for additional store-bought goods (clothing, kerosene, school exercise books and radios), school fees and taxes. There are a surprising number of people who have been educated and worked in the major urban areas of the country, but have preferred to return to their villages. Most villagers appear to enjoy a comfortable standard of living.

The tok ples of the area of Buka served by VTPS is Halia, an Austronesian language spoken or understood in one of its dialect forms by inhabitants of the north and east coasts of Bougainville. The tok ples of Buin is Telei, a non-Austronesian language spoken by the residents of South Bougainville. There is little written matter printed in either language outside of VTPS, although Halia has a published dictionary and the New Testament Bible, and both language areas have hymn books in their tok ples.

Many people also speak Tok Pisin (or Pidgin), the language of Radio North Solomons and the local Catholic Church. While those who have spent time in towns are most fluent in Tok Pisin most people, except the very old and the very young, can converse in it. Indeed, the extent of Tok Pisin fluency is borne out by the fact that almost all official village meetings are conducted at least partially, in the language. In Buin, however, many women do not comfortably converse in Tok Pisin, which, along with cultural norms, may partially account for their significant absence from most village meetings. Just about all day to day interactions are conducted in tok ples. The exception is of course, in community schools where the official language is English (however, one may hear a good bit of Tok Pisin, and sometimes tok ples on the school grounds).

Some Evaluation Issues

As the primary researcher in this project, it is important to share the perspectives I bring to the research, since any evaluation must be colored by the background and experience of the evaluator. My primary previous work and research experience has been in elementary education - as a classroom teacher, a supervisor of teachers, a teacher trainer, and educational consultant, and a programme evaluator - usually in multicultural and multilingual educational settings and the communities in which they are located. This means that the lens used in this evaluation is primarily that of an educator (as opposed, say, to a linguist, anthropologist or psychologist), and the results, I am sure, reflect that bias. Studies undertaken in the other disciplines are no doubt important and should be considered for future projects, but it must be understood that this evaluation comes from an educational perspective. (This paper does treat policy issues as well as issues pertinent only to the classroom, although those issues are dealt with primarily in the chapters authored by Graeme Kemelfield.)

Having stated the report's primary bias, it is also important to clarify several points on methodology. Two areas of distinction are useful to draw here, that between a formative and a summative evaluation, and that between qualitative/process methodology and quantitative/product methodology. As for the first distinction, a simplified definition of the two terms is that a summative evaluation answers the question of whether a programme has 'worked', and a formative evaluation, made most often in a programme's development period, of how the programme can be made to work better.

As for the second distinction between quantitative/product and qualitative/process paradigms, the former can be said to be more concerned with the measurement of the outcomes of a programme - in education most often with scores from achievement tests. The qualitative/process paradigm, on the other hand, "focusses on the internal dynamics and actual operations of a program in an attempt to understand its strengths and weaknesses.... why certain things are happening, how the parts of the programme fit together and how people perceive the program" (Patton 1978:165).

The present evaluation will contain both formative and summative as well as both quantitative/product and qualitative/process elements. However, for reasons detailed below, it will stress the formative and qualitative/process aspects of evaluation.

The summative, quantitative/product design can generate useful information when utilized under appropriate conditions. This is especially the case when the programme is sufficiently consistent across sites that the question of whether the programme in general 'works' can be a reasonable one to ask, when the participating children have received enough instruction within the programme that empirical measurement of the programme's effects is meaningful, and when the variables involved in determining outcomes can be specified with some reliability and agreement. There are several reasons, however, why a primarily summative, quantitative/product method of measuring the effects of the VTPS programme was inappropriate at the time of this research.

First, there was not yet an adequate description of what is actually happening in the schools. The reality of most programmes differs from the designers' theoretical conception. Furthermore, all programmes tend to differ considerably from site to site, in response to differing community contexts and different teachers. Given this variation, it was important to precede any quantitative evaluation with a description of the programme as it actually functions and the context in which it functions.

Second, the first group of VTPS-educated children was just entering the first year of community school (from five pilot schools, four in Buin and one in Buka) at the time the evaluation was undertaken. While it is undoubtedly useful to compare the achievements of those children with those who did not receive VTPS schooling, previous studies suggest that the benefits of a bilingual education to children, as measured by standardized achievement tests, only become evident after at least four years of instruction (Bovet 1983; Engle 1975; Malherbe 1946; and Rosier and Holm 1980). This would mean format testing in reading achievement at the beginning of Grade 3 of community school at the earliest, an approach recommended by international reading instruction researchet and specialist, John Downing (personal communication, 1982).

Finally, at the initial undertaking of this study, it was yet to be determined by those involved just what 'programme success' meant. Did it mean an increased pride in one's cultural heritage? high scores on Grade 6 tests? More community involvement? Greater eventual facility in English? Ability to read and write in one's mother tongue? Part of the evaluation, then, was to determine more conclusively by which variables the programme should be evaluated from programme participants themselves. However for a programme with a history of only two years of full operation, at the time, the greatest benefit of such an investigation undertaken at this early stage is to provide a base comparison for future evaluation when the programme is more solidly entrenched. To summarize the above points in brief, it is just too soon in the programme's life to say whether the scheme has 'worked'. What can and will be said in the following study is what appears to be working well, what not so well, and what changes could make it work better.

### About this Document

This report is divided into seven chapters. The first gives the history of educational language policy in the North Solomons and the background of the VTPS scheme itself. The second provides a review of research conducted around the world of similar educational programmes, and evaluates VTPS, in a more or less summative fashion, in the light of its stated overall goals. Chapters 3, 4 and 5 provide a formative assessment of the actual workings of the programme - its relationship to the community (Chapter 3), issues related to classroom instruction (Chapter 4), and the administration of the scheme (Chapter 5). Chapter 6 is devoted to a discussion of expansion funding and future planning, and the final chapter is a summary of the findings and a concluding statement.

This Introduction and Chapters 2, 3, 4 and 7 were written by myself. Chapters 1, 5 and 6 were written by Graeme Kemelfield, a principal initiator of the scheme and head of the North Solomons Education Research Project. His analysis is derived from first-hand experience of the research, planning and day to day operations through which the scheme has evolved over a period of nearly five years. Reference is also made in Chapter 2 to research conducted in the province during October and November, 1982 by Professor John Downing of the University of Victoria, Canada.

Let it be stressed here again that this report is not intended to dictate whether this programme should be continued, under what form, or for how long. A foreign researcher investigating only one educational programme cannot hope to have enough information to make the sensitive decisions on prioritorization involving all of the needs in the province. Rather, this report is intended so that those whose awesome responsibility it is to make such determinations will have an enhanced body of information to do so.

Lisa D. Delpit

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

In order to increase parental and community involvement in VTPS, the following should be considered:

A. Establishment of community-based committees with the responsibility to oversee and develop community-based aspects of VTPS curriculum, especially that of cultural studies.

B. Development of classroom activities which can draw parents into the programme and take advantage of community knowledge: for example, 'home work' which asks children to find out from parents and older relatives various 'tumbuna' stories or customs which they can then share in the classroom; to watch at home in order to explain in class the making of traditional crafts or foods, including bringing in samples where appropriate; and to construct traditional toys made of coconut fronds or other natural materials (small bows and arrows, 'helicopters', etc.) which they can talk about and display in the classroom.

C. In order to increase the support given to VTPS by Boards of Management, discussion at BOM and Parents and Citizens meetings with representatives from VTPS to clarify the programme's goals, and reiterate the need for and discuss ways of providing financial support at the local level if the programme is to continue.

D. In order to increase their participation in the VTPS programme, additional responsibilities specified for community governments within the scheme, as well as safe-guards to assist them in effectively carrying out those responsibilities.

E. In order to ensure the smooth operation of the programme, clarification of the relationship of VTPS to the community school and the community school headmaster.

F. In order to increase their ability to be supportive, inservicing of community school headmasters concerning the goals and methods of VTPS and the headmaster's role within the programme.

## II. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

A. In order to assure the selection and retention of good teachers:

1. No attempt should be made to limit the teaching force to those with secondary or higher formal education, as many Grade 6 leavers exhibit a high level of teacher performance.

2. The reasons for the delays in payment of teacher salaries should be identified and rectified.

B. In order to improve the training of teachers:

1. Opportunities for meetings between the area supervisors, teacher trainer, relevant S.I.L. staff, and central administration should be provided so that they may coordinate the teacher training program.

2. Additional teacher training in the areas of maths, cultural studies and other subjects that are non-literacy-based should be provided, and the teacher's guide for those areas completed.

3. Frequent reviews and practice sessions of the primer teaching method should be conducted.

4. Preservice training time should be lengthened, or an intensified inservice programme developed.

5. More and localized inservice with greater opportunities for practicing teaching skills should be provided.

6. Some form of mosquito control should be provided for the Tinputz Training Centre.

C. In order to improve the supervision of teachers:

1. Better transport should be provided so that supervisors are able to visit the schools under their jurisdiction (specific transport suggestions listed in section 4.C.3).

2. Training for supervisors in conducting supervisory visits and inservice meetings should be provided, and the publication of a supervisor's handbook considered.

D. In order to improve the classroom performance of teachers:

1. Teachers should be involved in some aspects of curriculum development (as detailed in sections 4.B.3 & 4.C.2.).

2. Bilingual teachers' guides in English and tok ples should be produced.

3. Teachers should be encouraged to expand the scope of their teaching programmes so that the literacy component of the programme is less book bound and instructional activities are not confined to the classroom, but make use of village resources.

4. Additional basic supplies - papers, pencils, scissors, crayons - should be provided for all schools.

5. Specific suggestions mentioned in the text for curriculum improvement should be implemented.

E. In order to improve the construction and equipping of VTPS classrooms:

1. Building guidelines regarding matters such as floor space, lighting, wall space, water supply, etc.) should be provided to each community to assist them in planning and constructing classrooms.

2. Sufficient numbers of small blackboards, a table and chair for each teacher, and a lockable storage area should be provided for each classroom.

## III. RECOMMENDATIONS ON ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFF ROLES

The recommendations of the evaluation concerning the administration of the VTPS scheme can be summarised as follows:

### A. Administrative Structure and Role of Coordinators

A revised administrative structure is proposed which gives the **Coordinator** overall responsibility for the four main areas of VTPS operations: administration, policy and planning, teacher training and language and materials preparation, in liaison with senior staff of the education division. The **Assistant Coordinator** would concentrate primarily on administrative matters, while undertaking duties in other areas of VTPS management as delegated by the Coordinator, bearing in mind the staff development and training aspect of the Assistant's role as a potential future successor to the Coordinator.

B. Role of Supervisors

The role of supervisors is to provide the basic link between the VTPS coordinators and teachers in the field, and to supervise and facilitate the programme of schools and teachers. It is recommended that the coordinators make every effort to support the work of supervisors, and to involve them in policy-making and programme development, including the formation of cultural committees in their language area.

C. Teacher Trainer's Role

It is recommended that particular attention be paid to the Teacher Trainer's role in developing teachers' competency through inservice and refresher courses and school visits, as well as basic preservice training, so that her potential contribution to the programme is fully utilised. It is also recommended that the Coordinator work closely with the trainer in the preparation, evaluation and revision of a teacher's handbook, paying special attention to the development of the year 1 curriculum.

D. The Role of S.I.L.

The role of S.I.L. staff is defined as that of consultants to the VTPS scheme, working in liaison with the Coordinator. Among the scope of their activities, the analysis of insufficiently studied languages in the province and the preparation of orthographies, grammars and dictionaries for them is singled out as a particularly vital future contribution. Another important development would be the preparation of books to teach children literacy in their indigenous musical forms. It is recommended that careful thought be given to the Tinputz Training Centre and the new S.I.L. Centre in Kieta as alternative sites for training courses and workshops, and to the provision of suitable housing for S.I.L. staff at Tinputz.

### E. The Role of Community Governments

Community governments provide the agency for Viles Tok Ples Skuls. However, their role is still not firmly defined. Their main functions to date have been to select and pay teachers, assist in the general oversight and encouragement of schools, and to help school boards of management in the provision of buildings. However, financial mismanagement in a few cases has led to the withdrawal of the right to pay teachers. It is noted that the VTPS scheme is intended to be a genuinely community-based one, and that this is not possible unless community governments have real participation in the scheme. It is recommended that the issue of payment of teachers and the role of community governments be further reviewed.

### F. Administrative Problems and Performance

It is recommended that high priority be given to the following aspects of administration:

1. **Advance planning** of operations with particular reference to training courses, and that a working environment conducive to efficient planning should be provided for the coordinators within the Education Division.

2. **Communication with field staff**, using all available means including correspondence, telephone, radio broadcasts, personal visits and inservices as appropriate.

3. **Continuation of an annual policy and planning workshop**, involving coordinators, the Teacher Trainer, supervisors and research staff.

4. **Materials production and delivery**, which should be reviewed by the Coordinator together with S.I.L. staff and the Assistant Secretary of Education.

## IV. RECOMMENDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE OF VTPS

A summary of the recommendations put forward is as follows:

### A. Expansion of VTPS

1. **A period of 40 years is proposed to phase in tok ples schools throughout the province, starting with the 1983-87 Five Year Plan. This allows for one VTPS corresponding to each community school by the year 2022.**

2. To meet this target, an average of around 4 new schools a year should be planned, requiring an increase of 5 to 6 new teachers per annum.

3. Approximately half the cost of new teachers' salaries should be found from savings within the present system, leaving an average 3 new salaries a year to be met by the provincial government. To this should be added the cost of one new supervisor's salary every 5 years.

4. The average cost of this increase in salaries to the provincial government should be equivalent to funding one new community school teacher's salary a year.

5. Priorities for the introduction of VTPS in different language areas should depend on the availability of linguists, public demand, and even-handedness in starting schools in different parts of the province. Specific priorities are proposed in Table 6.1.

B. Financing of VTPS Expansion

1. The main means of reducing budget costs while expanding VTPS in the short term should be by making biennial schools one-teacher schools.

2. As a longer term means, integration of VTPS Year 2 with Grade 1 of community school should be further researched for its practical implications. If it appears sound policy and necessary to effect an integration, such a policy should not come into effect until new syllabuses are trialled and teachers adequately trained for the task.

3. Teachers' salaries should be maintained at their present level but reviewed during the preparation of each subsequent Five Year Plan.

4. Two levels of payment for supervisors should be institutionalised. Supervisors living in town and/or with an especially large number of schools to supervise should be paid at a higher level than village-based supervisors with a limited number of schools to supervise. The final projected number of supervisors should be reduced to a maximum of seven.

5. Where a community has teaching materials prepared in its language and is anxious to start a school, but government funds are not yet available to pay teachers, it should be allowed to go ahead and pay teachers using its own resources, until such time as the provincial government assumes payment. This option of paying teachers 'in kind' (e.g. by planting and tending cocoa trees for them) instead of in cash should be proposed to parents and community leaders as an alternative for experimentation on a trial basis.

6. The Provincial Government Planning Section should explore the possibilities of a special education tax for funding expansion of the school system.

C. Language and Dialect Decisions

1. In choosing which dialects have separate materials developed, the criteria of linguistic similarities, community feeling and the composition of children in mixed schools should all be taken into account.

2. Consultation should be held with community school Boards of Management and community governments as to the desirability of starting VTPS in small towns and district headquarters. The option of Tok Pisin classes financed by parents should be discussed.

3. VTPS should not be considered in Arawa and Panguna unless strong pressure arises from parents. Research should be undertaken in the Kieta and Tubiana community school catchment areas as to the language composition of children and parental attitudes.

4. The establishment of local cultural committees to develop cultural studies and readers for VTPS should be actively encouraged in language areas.

5. Further study and development relating to the maintenance of tok ples literacy by children in community school should be given high priority in the work of the VTPS Coordinator.

# Chapter 1

# HISTORICAL BACKGROUND: LANGUAGE POLICY AND TOK PLES EDUCATION

To understand the policy issues involved in the development of tok ples skuls in the North Solomons, it is necessary to look at the background to their development: not only within the province in recent years, but also by placing them in the context of the past history of language policy in education in Papua New Guinea.

## 1.A. LANGUAGE POLICY IN EDUCATION: A HISTORY OF CONFLICT

The subject of language policy in education has been debated since the early days of colonialism in Papua New Guinea. The debate has particularly concerned the rival claims of tok ples and English as the medium of instruction in schools. It has always been an emotional subject, and is no less so today.

Two recent writers on the subject call it "this well-worn battlefield over which educationists in Papua New Guinea have marched and countermarched for more than 60 years, which encapsulates the contradictory forces influencing formal education" (Smith and Guthrie 1980:14).

What are these 'contradictory forces' in Papua New Guinean education? In sum, schools have always been the instruments for achieving two alternative goals: to serve the welfare and development of local, predominantly rural communities (however that has been conceived) or to contribute to empire or nation building and the development of a modern monetary economy.

In the colonial era, up until the Pacific war, conflict between these two goals of education was focused in the tension between Christian mission and government-sponsored education. The attitude of German administration from the early years of the century can be summed up in the words of Governor Hahl who said the purpose of teaching in German was, "to bring the natives round to understand German and Germany better, and to look at affairs through German eyes" (quoted Rowley 1958:250).

Following the Australian takeover of administrative control, "the government syllabuses of both territories (Papua and New Guinea) emphasized the teaching of English, the history and geography of the British Empire and the place of the native within it" (Smith 1981:12). English was taught as the necessary instrument of control and communication for building a colonial administration and economy, as well as being the bearer of civilization.

From the mission point of view, however, tok ples was preferred as the ultimate means of communication and conversion, and for the training of pastors, catechists and teachers. Most schools were run by missions, and their purpose was mainly to spread the Christian faith within local communities. They frequently resisted administration attempts to influence their language policy.

The obvious differences in the professed developmental aims of government and mission education, and in their language policies should not, however, disguise what they held in common:

> In providing formal education, the missionary societies and the colonial governments saw schools as powerful agents for change. There was never any intention that the schools should serve merely to reproduce the values, beliefs and lifestyles of the societies in which they were placed: in fact their explicit intention was the opposite (Smith and Guthrie 1980:8).

There is good evidence that this shared goal of colonial education, transfered in many respects into post-colonial independent Papua New Guinea, has been a source of unease in the North Solomons in recent years, and has been one factor in the pressure for changes in education policies. Perhaps the main lesson to be drawn from history is that the single-minded purposes of agents of change, whether mission or government, may not fully correspond to the real aspirations and perceived needs of rural people in their communities. If education and language policy is to be built as far as possible on the wishes of the people of the province, ultimately a political decision, then the question of what policies best serve the society needs hard scrutiny.

## 1.A.1. Community Attitudes towards the Languages of Education in the North Solomons Province

If we look at existing evidence of people's attitudes towards language in education, we find that the demand for the teaching of English as documented by Laracy, the historian of the Catholic Marist Mission in the Solomons, dates back at least as far as 1911, when "pupils showed 'incredible' concern for learning English, 'the language of Sydney '", Sydney being the port from which Europeans in the southwest Pacific were supplied, and which "was not uncommonly identified with heaven" (1976:83).

The Methodist Overseas Mission (followed later by the S.D.A.s) gained prestige in the 1920s by introducing English into their schools and Circuit Training Institutes after two or three years of exclusively mother tongue education. This Protestant challenge was perceived as seriously threatening to Catholic efforts to win converts and led to the opening of several English-medium schools, although most of the Marist missionaries were native speakers of French.

Later in the 1950s Roscoe, the second Director of Education, was recorded as meeting a delegation of Buin villagers in South Bougainville and reacting to their request for an English-medium government school by stating that there were already mission schools for their children. Their pointed reply was, "Tok bilong God, tasol" (Smith 1972:326).

The conflict between mission and community aspirations appears from the evidence to have been mainly a conflict over the restricted curriculum and aims of mission schools. It seems that mission tok ples education had become associated with a too limited view of village community life, which did not take sufficient account of people's aspirations to gain access to European sources of knowledge, material affluence and advanced technology, all associated with a mastery of the English language.

Equally, more recent evidence makes it abundantly clear how highly North Solomons communities have continued to value their own languages, and their concern for them to be again incorporated within the education system.

This desire has been most forcefully expressed in the Buin area, the same area where the demand for government English-medium schools was earlier reported. Nostalgia for earlier tok ples schools has been a persistent theme in interviews conducted in the province.

The conclusion is unavoidable that single-minded advocacy of an education system which uses only the medium of English, and ignores tok ples and the culture of which it is a part, is contrary to public opinion and aspirations in the North Solomons. At the same time, any advocacy of tok ples education which hinders the learning of English and access to a modern western-style curriculum has continually been rejected.

## 1.A.2. Attempts to Resolve the Conflicting Goals of Education and Language Policy in the Post World War II Period

Successive education ordinances, culminating in the 1970 ordinance which created a unified national education system, have resolved the conflict between mission and government education policies. The 'contradictory forces' influencing schooling, however, remain the same: how to reconcile an appropriate education for the majority of children who will leave school at Grade 6 or 8 and return to their village community for much of their lives, with an education which prepares students for secondary and tertiary studies and modern sector employment.

An attempt at such an integration was made by Groves, the first national Director of Education in the post-World War II period, who attempted to graft an English-medium system onto a base of largely mission-run village vernacular schools, intended to develop as community education centres. Groves' vision foundered because he lacked tok ples teachers adequately prepared to implement a curriculum which they were themselves required to create. Many of his teachers came direct from the Queensland education system.

Groves' weaknesses as an administrator, together with the drive for eduational expansion which came in the 1950s and 60s which was eventually to lead to the preparation of Papua New Guineans to take over the national bureaucratic machinery at independence, resulted in his termination as Director. Rosoce, his successor in 1959, introduced an Australian-style English-medium school system, and the use of tok ples in education was largely abandoned during the 1960s.

Renewed pressure both for tok ples literacy and a Papua New Guinean cultural element in the curriculum returned in the early 1970s, under the influence of a nationalist cultural renaissance which accompanied the onset of independence. The first Papua New Guinean Minister of Education, Olewale, and the first national Director of Education, Tololo, spoke publically in support of a multi-lingual school policy, and Port Moresby Teacher's College ran courses in vernacular education in preparation for the reintroduction of tok ples education. In the same period, concern for the situation of Grade 6 'push outs,' and a recognition that the future of most lay in rural community life, led to the adoption of a new community school curriculum divided between core subjects (English, maths, science) and community-based subjects, in an attempt to integrate the dual functions of the education system and resolve its contradictions.

When the 1976-80 Education Plan was finally approved by the National Education Board, however, no change was made in language policy. Resistance to change came from a core of influential expatriate staff in the University and government Education Departments, as well as from elements within the National Education Board and cabinet. Tok ples teaching was not barred within the community school curriculum, but no support was offered for its implementation.

The rejection of tok ples education at the national level was not echoed in the North Solomons, however, at a time when it was asserting its claims for provincial autonomy and subsequently establishing its provincial government. Moves to reintroduce tok ples teaching in schools began in 1974-75, through the province's Cultural Services, and a small experiment was begun in community schools in the Halia area of Buka with S.I.L. assistance. There appears to have been a lack of proper planning and motivation within the provincial Education Office at the time, however, and the project quickly collapsed. In the same period the S.I.L. ran orthography seminars for teachers in different areas of the province, in an attempt to standardise the alphabet of different areas of the province. They noted particular interest in the Buin, Siwai, Nagovisi, Banoni, Nasioi, Tinputz and Halia areas of the province. Planning documents from this period show a concern to develop community-based education, but it was not until 1978 that pressure for change built up again.

## 1.B. THE ORIGINS OF THE VILES TOK PLES SKUL SCHEME

The Viles Tok Ples Skul Scheme grew out of an informal week of consultation which took place in October, 1978 between the North Solomons Provincial Government (represented by the Provincial Planner, Mr Melchior Togolo and the Deputy Premier and Minister for Education, Mr. Naona Taniung) and the University of Papua New Guinea's Educational Research Unit (ERU), represented by a staff member, Mr. Graeme Kemelfield. During this week the North Solomons Education Research Project (NSERP) was planned as a collaborative venture between the ERU and the provincial government.

### 1.B.1. Community Dissatisfaction with Educational Provision and the NSERP

At the time when the consultation took place, there was considerable unrest in the province over the educational services which were being provided for its people. This reflected, in part, an unstable Education Division, which had suffered five changes of superintendents in the four years following the declaration of provincial government (a situation rectified from 1979). It also reflected feelings of grievance concerning the loss of local control over the content and direction of children's education, as a result of the steady development of the national system of English-medium education, with its curriculum designed in Port Moresby. Such feelings were strongly voiced during a forum involving community and church leaders from across the province held in Kieta during the week of the consultation.

The North Solomons Education Research Project was intended to investigate the aspirations of the people of the province for the development of education services, and to translate these aspirations into implementable projects. It was hoped that innovative forms of education would emerge which genuinely represented a provincial education system, sensitive to community needs and serving all sections and age groups in the community.

During the consultation, the Minister for Education indicated his conviction that there was considerable demand in the province both for pre-schooling, and for children to learn to read and write in their tok ples and to study their own culture.

A decision was therefore made, a) to prepare a community survey to explore community wishes in a more exact manner, and b) to design a form of schooling which combined a preschool preparation with tok ples literacy and cultural education. This would allow a proposal to be put to people during the survey to see if it met with their approval.

### 1.B.2. Viles Tok Ples Research and Planning Team

In February 1979, a research team of seven North Solomons staff and students at the UPNG was brought together under the coordination of Graeme Kemelfield from the Education Research Unit to design the community survey. A nucleus of four people within this team was given the task of designing what came to be called Viles Tok Ples Skuls. This working group consisted of:

Mr Naihuwa Ahai (Lecturer, Language Department, UPNG)
Mrs Naomi Martin (Lecturer, Education Department, UPNG)
Mr Benedict Okina (Arts graduate, UPNG, specialising in language studies)
Ms. Elizabeth Ibua (Headmistress, Asitavi High School)

The latter three were final year students at the time the group was formed. The group worked together with the NSERP Coordinator, Graeme Kemelfield, with two Summer Institute of Linguistics staff - Mr. Skip Firchow and Miss Mary Stringer - acting as consultants or discussants from time to time.

A number of basic issues concerning the social, cultural and educational aims of a tok ples school scheme were explored by the group over a period of four months, as well as practical ways of implementing these aims. In addition, questions were designed for the community survey, intended to find out whether the thinking of the group corresponded to what people were asking for in local communities.

### 1.B.3. The Community Survey

The survey was conducted in late June and early July 1979, by a supplemented team of ten researchers, working in pairs in selected communities in Buin, Buka, Kieta, Siwai, and Tinputz districts. The findings of the survey revealed that 93% of parents interviewed individually wanted children to be taught to read and write in their own language as well as English, and thought that teachers were available locally to teach it. Eighty-four per cent said they would be willing to contribute financially to the running of tok ples schools. Only 6% of those interviewed responded negatively to these questions.

Among respondents, 65% also thought children should be taught much of their traditional customs and beliefs, of which clan relationships, land rights, stories and the history of their place as well as the acceptable behaviour of the community were seen as particularly important (nine per cent thought only 'good' customs should be taught and 14% responded negatively). In addition, 55% thought that adding two years to children's basic education would also help school leavers to settle back at home more easily as they would finish Grade 6 two years later, although some thought it depended more upon other circumstances. In the Buin area where forums replaced individual interviews, it was strongly contended that two initial years of tok ples followed by an older leaving age for community school children would help them to adjust better to post-school community life.

Although Buin was the only area where community forums took the place of individual interviews, meetings with teachers and community leaders, school Boards of Management and community governments were also held in other districts, where the concensus of opinion confirmed the findings indicated above. Other clear preferences which emerged from these meetings were for delaying entry to Grade 1 in community school until children were 9 or 10 years old; for some form of pre-schooling to precede Grade 1; and for only half of each day to be spent in school during the early years, the other half to be occupied with normal home and community activities.

### 1.B.4. Initiatives to Start Tok Ples Skuls in the Buin Area

The strongest indication of local demand for tok ples schools, independent of the community survey, came in fact from the Buin area. In January 1979, before the university team had begun their work, the Catholic Area Council had requested the S.I.L. worker in Buin, Miss Margie Griffin, to organise a workshop at Patupatuai in order to prepare teaching materials in the Telei language of Buin for use in tok ples education. This was attended by 10 young Buin men and women and teaching materials were duplicated. During subsequent interviewing in the Buin area, a community leader forcefully said that if the provincial government did not act quickly to establish tok ples schools, then Buin people would go ahead and set up these schools of their own accord.

Several other aspects of feelings recorded in Buin district are worth noting. One is the concern for local management of Viles Tok Ples Skuls through community governments. Evidence that this feeling was widely held in the province emerged later during meetings between community government chairman and the VTPS Coordinator. Another Buin aspiration was for cultural committees to be established, to ascertain what children should be taught in the way of their customs, behaviour, stories and other aspects of their culture.

### 1.B.5. Final 1979 Proposal for Viles Tok Ples Skuls

Following the initiatives taken in Buin, the work of the research and planning team, and the findings of the community survey, a final proposal for Viles Tok Ples Skuls was prepared by the NSERP Coordinator. The proposal aimed to combine in the one institution a number of provincial goals for education. These were:

1. to create a system of education preparatory to Grade 1 ('Pre-school') for children of 7 and 8 years old, and thus to raise the community school entry and leaving

age by two years.

2. to provide literacy for children in their tok ples.
3. to provide an early education for children in their own custom and culture.
4. to provide other pre-school skills which would assist children to do well in community school.

To achieve this, the plan envisaged two-year village schools, each with two teachers drawn from the local community chosen as suitable by community governments, who would be the agents responsible for the schools. A balance between older and younger teachers, and men and women would be sought. The language syllabus would follow the S.I.L. teaching method devised by Sarah Gudchinsky, adapted to the needs of younger children, who would spend half of each day in school with afternoons free to take part in normal community life. The first year of teaching, when children were 7 years old, would have considerable emphasis on pre-reading and pre-writing activities, creative use of play, stories, songs and games drawn from local culture, and simple science and maths using materials in the environment. The second year would place more emphasis on literacy, and move closer to a formal community school education from a pre-school model.

The system was intended to have specific social, cultural and academic benefits. In terms of **socialisation**, the use of tok ples and the closeness to village life, with teachers drawn from the community, was intended to ease children's transition from home into a Western-inspired education system, which has often been described by observers as daunting for children because of the abrupt move into a foreign language (English). It was also hoped to make their education more meaningful for their parents. During the survey, parents spoke of their shame when children could not write letters, or name plants, trees or animals in their own language. The scheme was thus intended to relate children's education more closely to the society in which most would live their life after finishing school.

By beginning literacy in their tok ples, familiar from home, it was further hoped that children would master the skills of reading and writing more easily, without having to face the learning of a foreign language and new concepts at the same time. In this regard, the scheme was intended to increase children's confidence and motivation, and inspire a positive attitude towards school. This was the **educational** argument for Tok Ples Skuls.

Finally, to introduce tok ples literacy into children's formal education was a means of giving it the status, dignity and value within the education system which many people contended it had implicitly lost by being ignored in the national curriculum. The **cultural** importance of this argument, given the central position of language within culture, was given considerable weight. Taken together with the specific emphasis on other aspects of local custom and culture within the proposed curriculum of Viles Tok Ples Skuls, cultural maintenance and pride were viewed as important justifications for these schools.

A meeting was arranged between senior staff of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, the Minister for Education, Mr Denis Sareke, the Provincial Research Officer and the NSERP Coordinator, at which the possibility of S.I.L. assistance in running a VTPS scheme was explored. The S.I.L. were concerned to test the seriousness of the provincial government in seeking to provide the resources to finance, service and maintain a tok ples school system, and expressed some reservations as to whether this initiative represented a continuing commitment or a burst of short-lived enthusiasm. However, they expressed approval in principle, and the tentative offer of assistance in language analysis and the preparation of teaching materials for a limited period of time (1986 was mentioned for possible phasing-out). Provincial government should have staff trained to continue this work.

A proposal for establishing a Viles Tok Ples Skul scheme was then put forward to an August meeting of the Provincial Executive Council, which received strong support, notably from the Premier, Deputy Premier and the Minister for Education.

Approval was given for the post of Coordinator to be advertised, and two short-listed candidates were subsequently interviewed: Mr Levi Golu by university staff in Port Moresby, and Miss Ruth Kovoho by the Minister for Education, NSERP Coordinator and Provincial Research Officer in Rabaul. The names of the two candidates were then forwarded to the P.E.C. for consideration in September, together with recommendations from the Superintendent of Education, NSERP Coordinator and Provincial Research Officer.

The process of selection for Coordinator indicated the degree of political support for the scheme. The decision was a difficult one, as the two candidates had different but complementary strengths. Mr Golu was the final choice because of his years of administrative experience as a community school inspector and in Education headquarters. However, Miss Kovoho was more highly qualified academically, as a university graduate in Education. The Deputy Premier appealed to the P.E.C. not to allow a woman with the obvious promise shown by Ruth Kovoho to be lost to provincial government service or the new VTPS scheme. The P.E.C. then voted unanimously to create a second position of Assistant Coordinator and to appoint Miss Kovoho to the position.

At the beginning of September an offer by the S.I.L. to train the first teachers from Buin, and complete the teaching materials begun earlier in the year at Patupatuai with the teachers' help was taken up. Six trainees and a proposed supervisor from Buin attended a nine-week course at Ukarumpa, together with two teachers from Hanahan Village, Buka, and Mr Benedict Okina, who assisted S.I.L. staff members in preparing Halia and Nasioi teaching materials. Kuanua teachers from East New Britain also attended the course.

A S.I.L. report on the course dated 8th November, 1979:

> The students have worked very hard, often from early morning till into the evening...I estimate a total of about 400 man-days of work has been put in by the staff alone in connection with this course, not to mention the students' time (11 S.I.L. staff assisted). We are very happy that the East New Britain and North Solomons Provincial Governments have decided to go ahead with the vernacular pre-school programmes. The principle of literacy first in the mother tongue has been demonstrated to be a very effective approach to learning. S.I.L. has for a long time supported and encouraged this approach.

The Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator took up their posts in January, 1980, and by May four pilot schools in Buin were operating, and one in Buka at Hanahan. Policy decisions and plans were being made by a small steering committee consisting of the VTPS Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, the NSERP Coordinator and the Education Division's Senior Professional Assistant (Planner).

### 1.B.6. Establishment of a VTPS Teacher Training Centre

From September, 1979, negotiations were also being conducted with the United Church over the amalgamation of the Church's pre-school training programme, which was lacking financial and organisational support, and the new VTPS programme. It was initially agreed that the Church's Teacher Trainer, Mrs Rachel Kaetavara, should become VTPS Trainer, and that the Church's buildings at Kekesu should continue to be the training base, with a new dormitory to be built. A Board of Management was appointed. However, in the face of some potential internal political difficulties at Kekesu, the United Church Bishop recommended that the training programme should move to the available site of the former Tinputz Vocational Centre, and the move was made in June. In August, 1980, the first VTPS Training Course for Halia teachers was conducted at the new Tinputz VTPS Training Centre by Rachel Kaetavara together with the S.I.L. staff from Buka (Jan and Jerry Allen) and the VTPS Coordinator. The course was marked by the high motivation of staff and new trainees, and at the Independence Day celebrations, VTPS trainees won sports and choir competitions.

The official opening of the Centre was held during this training course, and was followed later by the first graduation ceremony, at which trainees were presented with their certificates by the Provincial Planner, Mr Melchior Togolo, with community government chairmen, Education staff and other visitors present. Subsequently, a Buin training course was held, and 28 graduates were presented with their certificates at the Buin Vocational Centre in March, 1981, by the Minister for Education, Mr. Michael Ogio. Speeches by the Minister, Provincial Planner and Education Superintendent on these occasions gave strong support to the programme, and this impetus given to the VTPS scheme in its first year was critical in giving it high morale and status within the province.

A further boost was given to the scheme when B.C.L. offered to print all VTPS materials free of charge (this assistance lasted until mid-1982). In addition, Ms. Audrey Aarons from the UPNG Education Faculty was asked to offer invaluable advice on the training programme as a consultant from 1980 to 1982.

### 1.B.7. Expansion of the Scheme

After the establishment of the four trial schools in 1980 and the training of teachers, the scheme was extended to other Halia and Telei schools in 1981, and in 1982, trial Haku and Nasioi schools were opened. Further expansion was restricted awaiting the outcome of this evaluation.

The scheme was officially incorporated into the provincial education system at the beginning of 1982, ending its period as a research project under the guidance of the NSERP. Figures for the development of the VTPS programme for 1985 (prior to the publication of this evaluation) are as follows:

Table 1.1 Expansion of VTPS

| Language | No. of schools | No. of teachers | No. of pupils |
|---|---|---|---|
| Telei (Buin) | 24 | 28 | 850 |
| Haku-Halia (Buka) | 16 | 31 | 906 |
| Nasioi (Kieta) | 8 | 18 | 334 |
| Teop-Tinputz (demonstration sch.) | 1 | 2 | 30 |
| TOTALS | 49 | 79 | 2120 |

## Chapter 2

## EVIDENCE OF THE VALUE OF VTPS

In order to evaluate a programme such as VTPS at such an early stage in its development, one must try to determine what aspects of the programme have given indications of already being successful, as well as to try to speculate which aspects are likely to be successful in the future. To attempt the former is to carefully examine the programme in light of its stated goals. To attempt the latter, one might review the world-wide results of programmes similar to the one under study, but which have had a longer history of development. The following attempts to accomplish both of these aims.

### 2.A. RESEARCH ON SIMILAR PROGRAMMES

In trying to anticipate the results of one programme from the actual results of another, there is always the risk of overgeneralisation, for no two settings and no two programmes are exactly the same. Therefore, the results presented below can only be a rough guide to what can be expected from VTPS. Variables such as teacher quality, instructional methodology, the social status of the language speakers, the linguistic relationship of the languages in question, the economic resources of the country as a whole, and so forth, are likely to vary from locale to locale.

1. In a trial programme in Maine, USA, French-speaking, French-American children received their education in both French and English, gaining literacy first in their mother tongue. After five years the children in the 'partial French' schools clearly outperformed those in the English-only schools on various aspects of English language skills and on academic content, such as mathematics, learned partly through French. At the same time French had become for them a much more 'literate' language (in contrast to only heard and spoken) because of the reading and writing requirements of French schooling. Follow-up reports showed that the French-trained children were consistently ahead of the control children in English language achievement test scores as well as in grade placement levels (Dube and Herbert 1975a and 1975b; Lambert, Giles and Picard 1975; Lambert, Giles and Albert 1976).

2. An experimental group of Navajo (American Indian) children who received bilingual Navajo/English schooling from

Kindergarten to Grade 6 had higher mean scores on tests in English at all grades above Grade 3 than did a control group of Navajo children who received all their instruction in English. With each successive year, the experimental mother-tongue group made more gains until at Grade 6, they were two full years ahead of the control group. It is significant to note here that the superiority of the mother-tongue group did not become evident until Grade 3, a point to warrant against premature testing of VTPS children (Rosier and Holm 1980).

3. In an early experiment in the Philippines, Hiligaynon-speaking children were given their first two years of schooling in their mother-tongue before switching to English in Grades 3-6. These children were compared to children who received all of their instruction in English. By the sixth grade the mother-tongue educated children were superior to the controls in social studies achievement and slightly higher in arithmetic and reading tests, although the controls scored slightly higher in language. A personality inventory was given at the end of Grades 4, 5 and 6. Mother-tongue children reported themselves higher on one of the four or five dimensions of that test (Engle 1975).

4. The Six-Year Primary Project (SYPP) of Nigeria is a somewhat different programme. Here the comparision was between three years and six years of mother-tongue medium education. All children in this province in Nigeria received three years of Yoruba schooling before switching to English. In SYPP, investigators wanted to see the results of providing an experimental group with all six years of primary education in the mother-tongue. A longitudinal study which followed children through the first year of secondary school had the following results:

   - The dropout rate was less for the experimental group.

   - In the area of affective benefits, the experimental children reported on a formalized inventory having fewer problems than control children and were rated more highly by their peers in secondary school in general social acceptability and as leader, study mate and playmate than were the control children (Yoyole 1976 as reported in Ojerinde 1978).

While academic results were mixed, children who had received all six years of their primary education via Yoruba with English taught only as a subject, scored just as highly on Grade 6 examinations in English as did those who had had three years of all-English medium instruction (Ojerinde, 1978). Afolayan (1978) also reported that the schools involved in the experimental programme enjoyed a high level of parental involvement, for the use of the mother-tongue encouraged both children and teachers to think of relatives, literate and illiterate as resources for formal education.

5. Skutnabb-Kangas (1978) found that the longer Finnish children who had migrated to Sweden were educated in Finnish, their mother-tongue, the higher was their achievement in Swedish, the primary school language. These researchers reach the conclusion that if children don't receive instruction in their mother-tongue, they may gradually lose competence in that language without compensatory gains in competence in the school language. This may result in 'semi-lingualism', a condition which results in a child's failing to acquire adequate linguistic skills in any language.

6. Indian children in Mexico received literacy training in their mother-tongue before switching to Spanish-medium instruction and literacy. These were significantly more successful later in Spanish reading comprehension than were children who had had all-Spanish-medium instruction. The mother-tongue schools maintained a higher percentage of female enrollment (enrollment for girls was generally very low), and for school-aged children in general than did the Spanish-medium schools (Modiano 1978).

There are some few published studies which contradict the trend suggesting the educational superiority of at least beginning formal instruction in the mother-tongue. The most commonly cited one is the French 'immersion' programme in Canada in which native-English-speaking children received all their education in French (Lambert and Tucker 1972). Although these children were successful in learning both English and French, critics (including the authors of the study themselves) insist that the results of this experiment are not applicable in most Third World countries. Similar results are only to be expected, they argue, where the children in question are speakers of the dominant prestige language of the country and/or are members of the upper socio-economic strata (Dutcher 1981; Lambert and Sidoti 1979).

What does the research appear to tell us? Given an adequate educational programme, children who are not native speakers of the official prestige language of a country and who are required to learn that language in school are likely to be more successful, both in learning the second language and in general social adjustment, if they at least begin schooling in their own mother tongue before being schooled in the second language.

The VTPS programme, then, is well founded on favourable precedents. Ostensibly, if the results of VTPS are in line with other similar programmes, children with VTPS experience can be expected to acquire English literacy skills more readily than their counterparts who have not had the benefit of VTPS. Furthermore, they might also be expected to adjust better socially to school, as well as to their communities, as a result of the VTPS experience. The following section attempts to assess how much that prediction has thus far been realized.

## 2.B. ASSESSMENT OF VTPS IN LIGHT OF ITS STATED GOALS

The goals developed in 1979 by the programme initiators list three areas of expected benefit:

(i) An **educational** benefit, by letting children start literacy in their mother tongue with which they are already familiar before proceeding to learn English, a second language. They would also gain other pre-school skills which would prepare them to do well in community school.

(ii) A **social** benefit, by giving them a basis of knowledge, skills, and values which would prepare them for participating in the life of their community after leaving school, and would enable them to complete community schooling later when they were more physically and mentally mature and ready to take part in community projects. It would also make their socialization into school easier by starting their formal education in their own language. This could give their education more meaning for their parents as well as themselves.

(iii) A **cultural** benefit, by allowing children to receive the foundations of their education in the language, culture and custom of their community and encouraging their tok ples to have equal status with the English language in their minds so that they are proud of it (Kovoho 1981).

### 2.B.1. Educational Benefits

The stated educational goals of VTPS assume benefits for the child both during his or her tenure in VTPS, and later on when the child has reached community school. As discussed in the introduction, it is too early to attempt to use standardized tests of English ability to measure the relative success of VTPS-educated children over those who did not have the benefits of VTPS, so other measures have been attempted.

At this early stage, community school achievement can be suggested by the reports of community school teachers of VTPS graduates. At the time fieldwork was carried out, only the children of the five pilot VTPS schools - four in Buin and one in Buka - had entered Grade 1. One of the Buin schools, however, was interrupted because of staff problems and did not complete the two-year programme. Of the four remaining schools, this researcher visited three Grade 1 classes of VTPS graduates and talked to their teachers. The results of those interviews and observations follow.

Additional data on the possible attainment of the VTPS scheme's educational goals comes from formal comparative research conducted by Professor John Downing on the "metacognitive readiness for literacy learning" exhibited by VTPS and non-VTPS-educated children. That research is also summarized below. Finally, a report of achievement tests conducted by this researcher to measure the extent to which children learned what was taught in VTPS is included. Children in Year 2 of three tok ples schools - two in Buin and one in Buka - were tested in reading, writing and spelling achievement.

#### (I) Grade 1 Teacher Assessment

In all cases the Grade 1 teachers of VTPS graduates interviewed expressed the superiority of those children over children they had taught previously who had not had VTPS training. The areas of superiority mentioned by the three teachers were suprisingly consistent. They all claimed these children were:

- more alert
- better behaved
- quicker to understand and follow the teacher's directions
- more confident in speaking out in class, and
- better readers (of English).

In two of the classes the children were much beyond the expected primer level. In one, the teacher had moved into Grade 2 reading books; in the other, where Grade 2 books were not available, the teacher had completed the highest level of a supplementary series, a series she said was much more difficult than the series ordinarily used in Grade 1 (a look at the book, verified her assessment). In the third classroom the teacher insisted that the children were more advanced, but this did not bear itself out in the children's performance to the same degree as in the other classrooms. The community school inspector commented that this particular Grade 1 teacher was older, seldom used English in the classroom (verified by observation), had difficulty in controlling the class, and in essence, was probably holding the children back.

In an observation of one of the Grade 1 classes, the children showed a surprising understanding of spoken English. The teacher asked the children riddles which required both a knowledge of English spelling and of English vocabulary, for example, "My first letter is m, my last is n. I am very big. Trees and grass grow on top of me. What am I?" (mountain); "My first letter is w, my last is n. I am very sweet. My fruit is red and I grow in a garden. What am I?" (watermelon); and "My first letter is d, my last is m. People beat me at a singsing. What am I?" (drum). Most children seemed to understand the spoken English, as their errors were on the side of meaning, as opposed to simply guessing from the phonic clues (for example, "kaukau" for watermelon and "kundu" and "bamboo" for drum), and the entire class was loudly and enthusiastically engaged. These riddles were new to the children and represent a fairly sophisticated comprehension of English, unmatched by most of the other community school children observed who appeared to be tied to rote memorization of English patterns.

These observations and teacher interviews tend to support the notion that VTPS-trained children are more likely to be successful in Grade 1 than are those without VTPS training. However, children who have attended VTPS are, on average, two years older than non-VTPS children, an age difference which could explain their superior skill. This was pointed out to the teachers. One responded that these children outperformed a third grade of similar age she had taught the year before, and another said that she had children in Grade 1 who were the same age as the others, but who had not attended VTPS. (One of these had transferred from another area, one just did not attend VTPS, and a third began VTPS but dropped out in Year 1 and did not continue.) These, she said, lagged considerably behind the others at mid-year and were struggling so much that the teacher had been trying to convince their parents that the children should, even at that late age, first attend VTPS before again trying Grade 1. (At least one of the children did go back to VTPS.)

This anecdotal evidence supports the view of a community school advantage for VTPS children, but clearly does not prove it. That proof will need to await a greater number of children continuing on to community school, as well as formal comparative testing of English competence beginning no earlier than the end of Grade 2 or Grade 3. Care should be taken in planning such tests, however, that the classes chosen for testing should not have had a steady diet of teachers such as the one mentioned who, through teaching deficiences recognized by community school supervisory personnel, have retarded children in their community school development.

(II) Formal Comparative Research

Professor John Downing of the University of Victoria, Canada visited the North Solomons in October and November of 1982, during which time he conducted research in three language areas of the province to study the "metacognitive readiness for literacy learning" (Downing, in press) of children who attended VTPS, and same-age children who went directly to Grade 1. The tests administered involved no reading, **per se**, but measured metacognitive language skills (using the Linguistic Awareness and Reading Readiness test and tests of phonemic segmentation ability), found to be highly predictive of later reading ability.

His findings show a significant superiority of VTPS mother-tongue-educated children over children in the same language areas who had received all of their schooling in English. This result has confirmed his hypothesis that children can learn the basic skills necessary for reading much more readily when the material of initial instruction is in the children's mother tongue. Downing suggests that this might explain the consistent finding around the world that children who begin literacy-learning in their native language are later able to perform much better in reading a foreign language. It is widely accepted that children only learn to read once, and that later literacy in other languages involves not re-learning the reading skill but transferring already acquired literacy knowledge to the second language. Therefore, if a child learns to read in a language which promotes successful learning of literacy skills, he or she can be expected to be more effective in transferring those skills to languages learned subsequently.*

Downing's additional research findings in the Highlands support the supposition that learning initial literacy skills in English is not efficient literacy training for Papua New Guinean children. He found, as expected, that children who had had no schooling, and consequently no literacy training, scored lower than children who had received literacy training in their mother tongue. However, those children who had **never** attended school scored **higher** on most measures than children who had attended school, but received literacy training only in English. This finding leads Downing to speculate that the cognitive confusion of attempting to gain initial literacy skills in a foreign language is so great as to retard children's metacognitive development to a level below that of children who have never attended school. If that is so, the research results provide a powerful statement in favour of teaching initial literacy skills in the mother tongue and not in English.

### (III) Achievement Testing

Another method of assessing the educational aspect of VTPS is to determine if the children are able to perform after two years of VTPS schooling at the level expected of them by the program planners. To get some idea of the levels of literacy achievement, this researcher conducted tests in three schools - two in Buin and one in Buka - at the end of the 1982 school year. Nine children were chosen from the Year 2 class of each school. Each group was identified by choosing every fifth name on the roll. (In Buka, because schools closed early due to a prolonged drought, children were chosen from those still available for testing.) That process meted a mixed sample in each case, with representatives from groups identified by the teachers as top, middle and low-achievers.

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*Since Professor Downing undertook his study, research by Dr. D. Moore on print comprehension by Grades 1 to 3 school children gives further indication of a significantly enhanced performance by children who have previously gone through VTPS.

The basic test consisted of a reading passage taken from a primer which the children had already completed sometime previously. This was scored for time, errors, and comprehension (three points if the reading time was under the mean time for that group, one point for each word read correctly, one point for each of three comprehension questions answered correctly).

In the second part of the test, children were asked to write a sentence from dictation. They received one point for each correct letter, one point for writing their name correctly, and one point for each correct capital letter and punctuation mark (see Appendix C for sample tests.)

Other sections of the test were added in different schools. In the two Buin schools, a section was included which tested the children's ability to read and comprehend a passage which they had not seen before. This passage was taken from a story written by one Year 2 VTPS child who was not tested, and was much more difficult than the primers. Again, one point was awarded for each word read correctly and one point for each of three correctly answered comprehension questions. A final section was conducted at one Buin school and the Buka school. This section tested the children's ability to read a passage written in Tok Pisin, a language which few if any of the children understood. The section was included to ascertain how well the children's phonetic training in tok ples would assist them in decoding another phonetically regular, though unknown language.

Observations of numerous schools revealed inconsistencies both in program completion and levels of achievement. The classroom in Buka discussed below had completed only one of five primers. The problems of teacher ability and program pacing are discussed in Chapter 4 in the sections on teachers and curriculum. These issues, however, are pertinent to this section in that those children in schools which completed most of the planned program (Buin 1 and Buin 2) were tested on subject matter much more advanced than were those in the Buka school, who could only be tested on materials in the first primer. High scores in the Buka school, therefore, do not necessarily indicate greater overall achievement, but rather mastery of the simpler subject matter taught.

The results of the testing showed that most children in each school were able to read the material presented without difficulty. In two schools, however, there was one child who had no idea of the reading process and one child with only minimal understanding. Table 2.1 represents a condensation of the tables presented in Appendix D. Here, the basic test was scored by tallying the total percentage correct each child received:

Table 2.1 Results of the achievement test

| | Buka School | Buin School 1 | Buin School 2 |
|---|---|---|---|
| | 100% | 100% | 100% |
| | 99 | 99 | 99 |
| | 97 | 99 | 96 |
| | 95 | 97 | 91 |
| | 92 | 94 | 89 |
| | 91 | 92 | 87 |
| | 85 | 92 | 76 |
| | 76 | 80 | 16 |
| | 0 | 62 | 0 |
| AVERAGE: | 82% | 90.5% | 73% |
| AVERAGE: (of those able to attempt task) | 92% | | 82% |

The Tok Pisin scores are listed below. Each Tok Pisin passage contained 12 words. Listed are the number of errors and the percentages of correct words read. (Ø means the child was unable to attempt the task.)

| | Buka | | Buin 1 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | errors | % correct | errors | % correct |
| | 0 | 100% | 1 | 92% |
| | 0 | 100 | 1 | 92 |
| | 2 | 83 | 2 | 83 |
| | 3 | 75 | 2 | 83 |
| | 5 | 58 | 2 | 83 |
| | 8 | 33 | 3 | 75 |
| | Ø | 0 | 3 | 75 |
| | Ø | 0 | Ø | 0 |
| | Ø | 0 | Ø | 0 |
| AVERAGE: | 6.0 | 50% | 4.2 | 65% |
| AVERAGE: (of those able to attempt the task) | 3.0 | 75% | 1.9 | 83% |

The scores of the children who were presented with reading passages they had never seen before are listed below. This section was only conducted in Buin because the children at the school tested in Buka had only completed the first of five primers and it was doubted that they could handle previously unseen material. (Since many were able to successfully read Tok Pisin this concern was probably unwarranted, but by that time it was too late to make changes in the test.) Table 2.2 represents the percentages of correct words read and the number of errors made in answering the three comprehension questions:

Table 2.2 Percentages of correct words read and the number of errors made in answering comprehension questions

| | Buin 1 | | Buin 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | % correctly read | errors in comprehension | % correctly read | errors in comprehension |
| | 100% | 0 | 100% | 0 |
| | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| | 100 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| | 100 | 0 | 84 | 0 |
| | 95 | 0 | 79 | 0 |
| | 89 | 0 | 42 | 0 |
| | 0 | 0 | 0 | 0 |
| | 0 | 0 | 100 | 0 |
| AVERAGE: | 76% | | 67% | |
| AVERAGE: (of those able to attempt the task) | 98% | 0 | 86% | 0 |

The results of these tests indicate that most children in the second year of VTPS who were tested have learned to read and comprehend the phonemes of their tok ples which they have been taught, that they are able to write and spell their own language with generally fewer errors, that most are able to read and comprehend material not previously taught, and that most are able to transfer their knowledge of reading in tok ples to decoding Tok Pisin without too much difficulty.

As noted, however, there is probably a great deal of variation among schools. From observations of considerably more schools than were tested, it would appear that the two schools in Buin were probably at or above the Buin mean, and the school in Buka was probably below the Buka mean. Still, the success of the Buka children suggests that even those children are competent in the material which they have been taught. Generalizations to other schools should be made with caution, although given supportive observations, it is probably safe to assume these scores provided a reasonable average of the overall level of programme achievement in literacy skills.

## (IV) Other Evidences of Educational Success

Thus far, all evidences of educational benefit have related to later community school success, however, an anecdote of an incident which occurred in Buka points to another possible post-community school benefit not mentioned in the original goal statement. This researcher showed the newly published **Halia Dictionary** (produced along with many other Halia writings used in VTPS by the Halia Tok Ples Committee) to a first grader who had completed VTPS. She excitedly read the Halia words, and when told that the other half of the page showed English words, she proceeded to teach herself some English vocabulary and refused to close the book for over two hours. As the Tok Ples Committee continues producing bilingual literature, as they plan to do in the future, such occasions for independent learning will present themselves frequently to children and adults literate in tok ples.

Children who have received literacy instruction only in English may not fare so well; several children in Grade 3-6, by no means a representative sample but all having some English reading ability, either could not read the Halia words at all or could only read some, and those with great difficulty. This factor may be especially important for those individuals who complete their education at Grade 6. Many village dwellers expressed to this researcher a keen desire to have some means of improving their knowledge of English, and those literate in tok ples could conceivably use the bilingual resources produced by the Tok Ples Committees to later engage in independent learning of English. In this context it is also of interest to discuss the meaning of the results of the Tok Pisin section of the previously mentioned Year 2 tests. What those results mean is that most children who leave VTPS are not only already literate in their own language, but they **also** have the ability to read Tok Pisin. Although they do not yet comprehend that language, understanding of Tok Pisin comes early to most people of the North Solomons. For those, therefore, who do not complete community school, or who for whatever reasons do not acquire English literacy, Tok Pisin literacy may make a crucial difference in their ability to function in many elements of present-day Papua New Guinean society.

## 2.B.2. Social Benefits

This is perhaps the hardest area to evaluate, depending as it does on the measurement of elusive attitudinal factors, as well as on determining the long-term effects of the program on the kind of people children become once they have completed all of their schooling. It is impossible to know now whether having participated in VTPS and terminating community school two years later will develop young people who are better integrated and more satisfied members of their communities. Even at a later date it will be difficult to determine how to measure an individual's degree of community integration, particularly as the VTPS Scheme is not intended to function in isolation, but rather as part of a comprehensive and innovative provincial education programme involving experimental community schools, school-leaver training centres, and adult community education, reinforcing a common provincial education philosophy.

Nonetheless, since some form of evaluation of this aspect is called for at this time, perhaps it is better to attempt that task by separating the sub-benefits mentioned in that goal, and discussing the relevant data thus far available.

### (I) VTPS will Prepare Children for Participation in the Life of the Village after leaving School

What can be said at this early stage of VTPS is that, based on interview data, many parents and teachers already perceive children to be participating more successfully within village life. Such perceptions are no doubt important, for social relations are inevitably dependent on what people perceive to be the case. Some parents claim that children are better behaved, more willing to help in chores around the house, and more knowledgeable about and interested in traditional ceremonies than were their older children who did not attend VTPS.

### (II) VTPS will Allow Children to be more Physically and Mentally Mature When They Enter and Leave Community School

It is interesting to speculate what effect the two-year delay in entering and completing community school may have upon VTPS children. As for the later entry age, several factors may be noted. Firstly, research has indicated that children who begin the **formal** (in school) study of a second language at a later age are more successful in learning that language than are children who begin formal study earlier, especially - as is the case with VTPS - when both groups receive the same total amount of formal instruction in the second language (Carroll 1975; Skuttnabb-Kangas and Toukomaa 1976; Snow and Hoefnagel-Hohle 1978). This data supports the contentions of many of the parents interviewed that children's "heads are not strong enough" to learn English at the usual community entrance age. Consequently, although the delayed entry into community school was intended as a social benefit, it may also contribute to later increased achievement levels in English, as appears already to be the case in VTPS Grade 1 intake classes.

More pertinent to social questions were the observations, formal interviews, and casual conversations with parents - especially mothers - which revealed some attitudes rather different from Western ideas about school entry age. Most parents who attended school did not begin until age nine or ten at the earliest. The parents questioned, especially those in Buin, expressed concern that children of seven years of age are still too young for school. This perception of many parents possibly accounts for much of the absenteeism and/or drop-out from Grade 1. It certainly was agreed among many VTPS parents to be the reason for much of the absenteeism in Year 1 of VTPS. The major difference, however, is that at this time VTPS is something of a buffer zone. There is more freedom in dropping out for a year and returning the next (something which is apparently not uncommon). In Grade 1, however, when a child drops out or is frequently absent, that usually means the end of his/her schooling. There is no returning.

As for the effect at the other end of community school, any comment now would contain a great deal of speculation. Interestingly, as the education system is presently structured, young people leave community school - and consequently any form of structured adult input - just at the age (about 12 years) when in traditional society they would have begun to receive the most overt adult guidance through instruction for various initiation rites. Most initiation ceremonies have ended for numerous reasons, and now, because daily participation in schooling has prevented most young people from developing roles for themselves within day-to-day village life, many are left at age 12 with nothing much to do.

From observation it appears this is less of a problem for girls, who join in the work of their mothers providing food and looking after younger siblings, or sometimes acting as babysitters for wage-earning relatives. Boys, however, seem to be particularly disadvantaged by this early school-leaving age. Judged too old for participating in activities with their mothers and too young for those of the men, they are caught in the middle. The result, according to the respective communities, is a high incidence of very young and doomed-to-fail marriages in Buka, and increasing 'rascal' activities in Buin. A school-leaving age of 14-15 instead of 12-13 is seen by many community members as one means to combat that period of problematic idleness in the present system. Then, too, for children who are able to continue into vocational training, a later school exit age eliminates the 2-3 year gap which ordinarily occurs before children are allowed into vocational training at or about age 15.

The effect of the later community school exit age on high schools is a moot issue. The drop-out rate in high school is very high, creating a situation in which many resources are wasted.

Between Grade 7 and 8, that rate in the North Solomons in 1982 was 7.5% and between Grades 9 and 10, 4.4%* (1983 NSP Education Plan, in press). Conversations with Grade 7 leavers in the villages reveal that many left high school because they were homesick and missed the support of family and friends. This could be assumed to be a result of a general lack of maturity, and it could be argued that a later entry age would make the transition to high school just that much easier.

On the other hand, it has been suggested by some educationists at the national level that school drop-out in the last years of community school and early years of high school might be due to pressures from parents that children return to help them in making a living, or to young people feeling themselves too old for the juvenile activity of schooling. While this does not appear to be the case in NSP, where secondary schooling receives such strong community support, further research into the cause of high school drop-out is warranted.

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*The drop-out rate between Grades 8 and 9 was 27.5% but that does not concern us here as it is due primarily to the screening test given at the end of Grade 8.

### (III) VTPS Will Provide for Easier Socialization into Community School

As was already discussed in the section on education benefits, community school Grade 1 teachers of children who have completed VTPS report them to have adjusted much more rapidly to community school than children without VTPS training. They report them as being "easier to teach", a teacher attitude which frequently predicts teaching performance at the uppermost limits of teacher's capability. the "easier to teach" children may evoke a reciprocal pattern of better teachers, and subsequently, higher achieving children.

### (IV) VTPS Will Make Education More Meaningful for Children and Parents

Again, it is most difficult to decide how one might measure 'meaningfulness' for either parents or children. The measures considered below - parental and child attitudes determined by observation and interviews, observed parent involvement, and child absentee and drop-out rates - can only begin to assess the social significance of the VTPS program to parents and children. (The first two measures are further discussed in Chapter 3.)

#### (a) Parental and Child Attitudes

Parents consistently praised VTPS, often quite eloquently. Many talked about the educational benefits VTPS provided, but most stressed the social implications of the scheme. Two statements, both made at Parents and Citizens meetings, summarize the tenor of parental comments:

> I may not know too much but I'd like to speak. Why do we educate children? Is it for the development of the country? But what is development? If we only educate a child so that he learns things to help him make money, he may be educated, he is not a real man. If he comes back to his place and only brings money and a knowledge of making new money, and that's all he's interested in, then he's half a man. But if a man brings a dedication to help his community, then no matter how much money he has, he is a whole man. And that is development. This tok ples school is the other side of education. Not the side that shows a person how to make money, but the side

> that makes a child learn about and love the community he is a part of. With the tok ples school, we can educate a child to be a whole man.
>
> Parent
> Hakets Village Tok Ples School
> Buka NSP

> When children go to school, they go to an alien place. They leave their parents, they leave their gardens, they leave their homes, they leave everything that is their way of life. They sit in a classroom and they learn things that have nothing to do with their own place. Later, because they have only learned other things, they reject their own.
>
> They don't want to dig kaukau, they say it's dirty; they don't want to help their mothers fetch water. They look down on these things. There are big changes in children now. They don't obey their parents; they become rascals. And this is because they have gone to school and left the things that are ours.
>
> Now, my child, he is in tok ples school. He is not leaving his place. He is learning in school about his customs, about his way of life. Now, he can write anything he wants to in tok ples. Not just things he can see, but things he thinks about, too. And he writes about his place. He writes about helping his mother carry water, about digging kaukau, about going to the garden. When he writes these things they become important to him. He is not only reading and writing about things outside, but learning through reading and writing to be proud of our way of life. When he is big, he will not reject us. It is important to teach our children to read and write, but it is more important to teach them to be proud of themselves - and of us.
>
> Parent
> Laitaro Village Tok Ples School
> Buin NSP

These and other such statements express a strong feeling on the part of many parents and community members that academic education is fine, but what really concerns them is social and moral education - the education that schools youngsters to become good people, who care about, participate in, and are proud of their communities. They see VTPS as able to provide that kind of education.

As for the meaningfulness of VTPS to children, parents report that their VTPS children discuss at home more about what happens in the classroom than do their children educated only in community school. Reportedly, VTPS children also share their knowledge with older and younger siblings by teaching them how to write tok ples words, usually sitting down in the evenings and writing on the ground with a stick. The interest of older children is obvious, for in several of the schools visited, the VTPS classrooms were frequented by older community school children at recess times when the younger ones helped the older ones read tok ples primer lessons written on the blackboards. It is not easily measured, but it is probably that the opportunity to act as teacher to older children makes VTPS children's own schooling more 'meaningful'.

Furthermore, observations within the VTPS classrooms indicate a tendency toward greater child involvement than in the non-VTPS community school classrooms. This finding is not surprising, in that children are better able to participate in class discussions when the medium is a language they fully comprehend. This, too, is likely to influence children's feelings about school in a positive direction.

### (b) Absentee and Drop-out Rate

A more objective measure of child and parent interest in VTPS - absentee and drop-out rate - cannot present a very clear picture at this time. In 1981 the drop-out rate of VTPS was 3.3%, and for Grade 1 3.7%. This comparison would appear to suggest little difference in attrition rates between the two systems. However, there are significant differences within the systems themselves. Although there is variation, most of the children in Grade 1 of community school are close to the seven-year-old entry age. However, in 1981 children in VTPS initially spanned an unbelievably wide age spectrum. Because there was such parental interest in the schools, many children who were well over age, but had never attended community school, appeared in the VTPS classrooms.

One observer remarked about a Buin school, "Those preschool students have breasts and beards". Because there was such strong community sentiment, many such students were allowed to enroll, as it was correctly assumed that most would drop out of their own accord. This, coupled with the fact previously mentioned that younger VTPS children appear to drop out and then return the next year to begin again - an option not available to Grade 1 students - makes the comparison of these drop-out figures highly suspect. At the very least, figures for 1982, when presumably a more age-consistent and consequently more stable VTPS cohort will have been established, must be awaited for comparison.

### (V) Other Social Benefits

One additional social benefit has been not to children or to parents, but to the VTPS teachers. Providing useful and important work in the village for young school leavers is significant in fostering village cohesiveness. Some young people, bored and restless after leaving school, have become involved in various kinds of community disturbances which led community leaders to express their concern publicly over the directions that society was taking in 1978-79. The VTPS teachers in each community are not only themselves engaged in meaningful work, but in many instances also provide a useful role model for other young people. In the words of one young woman teacher: "The young men used to tease me, but now they come around and help out".

## 2.B.3. Cultural Benefits

Depending on one's approach to culture, the VTPS program thus far is either a great success or something of a failure. On the one hand, language is often seen as the greatest manifestation of culture, and in this sense, the program is, without a doubt, culturally successful. On the other hand, the teaching of specific cultural studies, originally considered to be an important component, is not one of the program's strongest elements. Both issues are important aspects of anticipated cultural benefits, and evidence supporting the success of each is discussed below.

### (I) VTPS will Provide a Cultural Benefit through Language Maintenance

That most North Solomons people see their language as a vital part of their culture cannot be questioned. This sentiment, reiterated by individuals throughout the province was expressed eloquently by Raphael Kora, previously headmaster of Hanahan Community School in Buka:

> When I think about my education, I know that there was a very big gap We were taught in English and so we were

> molded to go outside, to leave our villages and go to cities to find jobs. No one taught us about our own language our own place. They trained us to leave, not to stay. Australian and American children are taught English for many years, not just so they can learn the language, but so they can learn their history, their values, and their culture. We must train our children in the history, values, and culture of our people, too. And we must use our language to teach them, for language is culture. If we truly understand our language we can say that we truly understand our culture. Our language tells us our relationship to everything -- to the elders to our parents, even to the sand, the rocks, the sea, and the stars. If my children are divorced from my own language, then I cannot teach them, and then my children will reject both my culture and me.

Language, then, is seen as an integral part of cultural identity. It is also frequently spoken of as needing to be 'saved' from English and Tok Pisin influences. In both Buka and Buin, regret is expressed that people nowadays mix languages and that they substitute English or Tok Pisin terms for already present Telei or Halia terms (for example the anglicized **uin** (wind) has come to be substituted by many younger Telei speakers for the Telei term, **kakagu**,and **aata** (hat) has come to be substituted for **kuukutu.** The children in tok ples school are learning the original Telei and Halia words instead of English-influenced replacements. Adults are very happy with this development and frequently exclaim when shown stories their children have written, "This is **really** our tok ples". Indeed, this difference is so marked that several younger parents in Buin who were able to read tok ples found it difficult to understand the children's writing because they were using words and phrases 'from before'. Still, they view that development with pride, and sometimes laughingly relate with great satisfaction instances of VTPS children 'correcting' their parents' speech.

### (II) VTPS Will Provide Cultural Benefits through the Teaching of Specific Cultural Studies

This aspect of the program has proved less successful for several reasons. Firstly, most VTPS teachers are quite young, and having themselves experienced only Western schooling, frequently do not know very much about their own cultural heritage. They are therefore understandably at a loss to teach it. This difficulty was anticipated by programme planners, who expected older members of the communities to become 'culture teachers' for the VTPS children.

During the first full year of the scheme, some did indeed come in to teach the children. Somehow, however, a rumour was spread that the provincial government would provide pay for these services. When no money was forthcoming, these individuals ceased coming in and most teachers were at a loss to know what to teach. (See Chapter 3 under Community Attitudes and Involvement for further discussion of this issue). Some enterprising teachers took it upon themselves to talk to older people in the evenings to unearth as much teachable material as possible, and others brought tape recorders into the villages to record stories and songs which they later played in the classrooms. Many, however, seemed to abandon most efforts at teaching the subject.

In attempting to address this problem, one suggestion was, rather than try to get elders to come into the classrooms, VTPS teachers should take children into the villages to where the elders were. It was thought under those circumstances money would not be expected. While a worthy idea in theory, in practice it did not quite work out. Teachers appear to be very reluctant to take their classes into the villages: in some cases, probably because young female teachers are shy and embarrassed to approach older, knowledgeable men, especially 'bigmen' or elders. In other cases, as one community school headmaster in Buin explained, in schools which draw children from several villages, adults frequently fear sorcery if children are taken without their parents into a village other than their own.

In a recent meeting in Buka, part of the evaluation research, several village bigmen expressed concern at the limited nature of cultural studies within VTPS. They suggested that more of the cultural history of the region should be recovered and recorded in printed form in the Halia language. They believed that such a 'culture book' must be created while they, the elders, are still alive and can guarantee its authenticity. Partially in answer to these concerns, the former VTPS Coordinator, himself a native of the Halia language area, undertook to research Halia traditions and produce a teacher's manual for cultural studies which could be used as a guide to producing similar documents in other areas. Unfortunately, he left the position before this work was completed, but it is hoped his successor or the Buka area supervisor will continue the task. There have been discussions, too, about creating 'culture committees' of community members to help support the cultural aspect of VTPS.

### (III) Cultural Influences of VTPS Outside the Classroom

VTPS, at least in Buka, has also inspired an increased interest in traditional knowledge beyond the confines of VTPS itself. One young father, for example, admitted that he frequently visited the school, ostensibly to check on the children's progress, but really so that he himself could learn aspects of the Halia language and culture being taught in the classrooms.

The Halia VTPS supervisor is himself hereditarily in line for traditional leadership, and has, through long discussions with village elders, made inroads into rediscovering aspects of traditional mathematics. His discoveries have created excitement amongst some Halia-speaking community school teachers. One teacher enthusiastically related her amazement at discovering that the geometric shapes she had thought were present only in the Western conceptual system also had a strong place in traditional Halia culture. Another teacher spoke with excitement about the possibility of using Halia methods of counting various items in groups to teach multiplication and division. This expanded use of Halia-influenced mathematics may well extend beyond the North Solomons in the future, as a consultant for the national government who had been commissioned by the national Department of Education to write a new mathematics textbook visited Buka in June of 1982, and after talking at length to the VTPS supervisor, has decided to possibly use some of the Halia-based mathematics in the new textbook.

Again in Buka, VTPS appears also to have encouraged the production of materials written in Halia. The Halia Tok Ples Committee, initiated by S.I.L., but presently completely Buka-operated and led by Maurice and Margaret Koesana, has been in the process of developing bilingual materials for use in VTPS and in community schools. This group has also taken the initiative to seek and acquire assistance from CUSO (a Canadian aid organization) to print and publish its products.

## 2.C. SUMMARY

2.C.1. Educationally, Grade 1 teachers assess VTPS children as being generally superior to those children who have not had the benefit of VTPS. Secondly, tests conducted by Professor John Downing show a superiority in metacognitive readiness for literacy learning (a skill linked to later reading ability) for VTPS children as compared to the same age Grade 1 children. Thirdly, approximately 90% of those children tested showed the ability to read and write in their language as well as the ability to read Tok Pisin. (This percentage corresponds to the 85-90% figures given by the teachers of the VTPS classes tested as representing the total percentage of children in their classes who they thought were able to read.)

Finally, literacy abilities acquired in VTPS may assist children, once they have left school, in furthering their knowledge of English through their ability to take advantage of learning through bilingual tok ples/English materials. Their ability to read Tok Pisin would also help them in functioning in society should they leave school before becoming literate in English. These results imply that while the educational benefits of VTPS are not yet able to be completely assessed, indications are promising that such benefits can be anticipated.

2.C.2. Socially, parents perceive children to be participating more successfully in village life as a result of VTPS. The long-term effect of VTPS - to what extent it is able to rectify problems community members identified in the 1979 survey - while no doubt the true measure of the programme's success must await the assessment of community members themselves, including those adults who were originally VTPS children, in the context of a dynamically changing society.

The effect of the two-year delay in entry to and exit from community school is yet to be seen. Research indicates that beginning formal study of a second language later rather than earlier can result in an increased ability in that language. Parents when questioned almost universally believe seven years is too young an age for children to begin community school, and are much happier with the age nine entry. Communities believe that a later exit age may forestall several social problems which 12-13 year-old school leavers face, including problematic idleness and the 2-3 year gap before being able to enter vocational training. As for those who continue into high school, interviews indicate that an older entry age may reduce the number of Grade 7 drop-outs due to immaturity, although further research into the cause of drop-outs is warranted to determine if an older high school entry age may instead increase attrition.

As to whether VTPS schooling is more meaningful to children and parents, what can be said now is that children seem to enjoy these schools and actively participate in all activities. Parents speak highly of the schools, indicate strong support for their continued existence, and, although they seldom become involved in classroom activities, seem to observe VTPS classrooms and talk to VTPS teachers more frequently than they visit community schools or talk to community school teachers. Social benefits to VTPS teachers have also been noted; many Grade 6 leavers are given meaningful and important work in the village as a result of the programme.

2.C.3 Culturally, in response to parental and local community wishes articulated during the 1979 research, children are indeed receiving the foundations of their education in their own culture and language. Adult community members express satisfaction with the idea, although they wish to see more cultural elements included in the programme. There have also been effects of VTPS beyond the VTPS classroom -some community school teachers have become interested in newly rediscovered traditional conceptual systems, which they are incorporating into their more Western-based subjects. This trend, should it continue, suggests that the VTPS cultural emphasis could extend throughout primary schooling. Additionally, VTPS has helped stimulate the spread of a standardized form of the various indigenous languages in which the schools are working, as well as the production of literature in those languages. Although the teaching of specific cultural studies is at the moment weak, steps are being taken to address that weakness.

## Chapter 3

## THE RELATIONSHIP OF VTPS TO THE COMMUNITY

VTPS is intended to be a community-based operation, so it is important to assess that aspect of its functioning. The following reviews the attitudes about the program held by parents and community members, and the scheme's relationship to the more formal community structures -- the school Board of Management, the community government and the local community school.

### 3.A. PARENTAL AND BOARD OF MANAGEMENT ATTITUDES AND INVOLVEMENT

As previously discussed, there is great support for VTPS from parents and community members. They speak enthusiastically about the benefits of VTPS they have already experienced or expect to accrue. Apart from the attitudes about social benefits already discussed, parents say their children in VTPS are already reading and writing, and contrast this to children who don't accomplish the same skills in community school until much later. All VTPS parents questioned who had older children who went directly into Grade 1 said that the VTPS children were "winning" their older children academically.

The following summarizes the other most common comments made by parents as to why they believed their children's participation in VTPS was so important:

1. They must learn to get along with the people in the village. If they go away to towns or to high school they must not get 'bigheaded' thinking they are above people because they know English or Tok Pisin. They must be able to communicate with their own kind.

2. Children aren't ready to learn English at seven years old. They never catch up if they start too early; They miss out on understanding basic ideas. When they begin in tok ples, teachers can explain things so that they understand. Otherwise they can go right through high school not comprehending the basics.

3. Children must learn their own culture and customs before learning those of the white man.

4. Older children who did not attend VTPS cannot communicate with their parents and relatives when they move away from the village. They can only write letters in English and the people at home cannot

understand. VTPS children will be able to communicate no matter how far away they go.

5. VTPS-educated children will be able to write about things in tok ples so that they can make books for everyone in their place to read.

These reasons were given not only by village parents, but also by the surprising number of parents who, although living and working in Arawa/Kieta or in urban centers even further afield, send their children back to live in their home villages with relatives, for the sole purpose of enabling them to attend VTPS.

Parents and community members were, however, critical of one aspect of VTPS, and that was in the area of cultural studies. While they were pleased that their language was being taught and maintained, they thought there was insufficient study of other cultural traditions, such as making tradition crafts, learning about special feasts and ceremonies, and learning the behaviours appropriate in relationships with various relatives. Many of those interviewed stated that there needed to be 'culture teachers', village people expert in traditional customs, as well as the regular VTPS teachers, whom they believed were too young to know how to teach culture properly.

Members of the Boards of Management (BOM) interviewed shared the positive attitudes held by parents (the groups overlapped to some extent). Most VTPS schools share a BOM with the community school, and all parties involved indicated favourable relationships. Teachers say that in most instances they find the BOMs supportive of their needs.

Despite all of these positive attitudes, however, there is not the sense of involvement in VTPS which might be expected from a community-based programme. When parents and board members were asked if they felt they had more power to control or influence their children's schooling since VTPS, they frequently answered that they have the opportunity to do so, but have not taken advantage of it. This fact is sometimes frustrating to many teachers, who wish to create a VTPS program sensitive to the desires of the community, but do not know how to get community input. Furthermore, any requests for community assistance in teaching culture or customs is generally met with counter requests for financial remuneration for such services. It would appear that, accustomed as they are to nationally-mandated curricula, parents are not yet able to comprehend and fully make use of a school which is supposed to belong to them and be under their guidance. One parent said that the interest was there but there was no one to initiate. That initiative must probably come from at least two sources - new efforts at community involvement initiated by individual schools, and the establishment of committees of interested persons at the BOM or community government level to oversee aspects of the curriculum.

The founders of VTPS envisaged a joint effort between local communities and the provincial government. However, on the part of Boards of Management, there also appears to be a sense that VTPS schools 'belong' to the provincial government in the same way as they see community schools belonging to the provincial and national governments. One member was adamant about the need for VTPS, but when asked about helping to raise money to build a needed VTPS classroom in his school, said, "If the provincial government wants to have this school, they ought to provide buildings for it." At two other schools BOM members said the provincial government, if they wanted to have these schools run right, must pay for additional 'culture teachers'.

These attitudes are not intractable, however. This researcher engaged in discussion with board members, clarifying the original VTPS concept, informing members of the difficult financial situation the province was facing, and explaining that, given that some provincial officials questioned the use of limited provincial funds for the program, VTPS could well be in danger of terminating if there was not community support for the scheme. After such discussions attitudes soften. At each meeting members talked amongst themselves for a while and then made a clear statement, "You go tell the provincial government we want these schools and we'll try to find money to help keep them going."

These meetings were held in only four schools, but if greater BOM support is desired, then many more such meetings should be considered. It became clear during the research that while specific community members requested VTPS in the 1979 research, these are not necessarily the same community members who are presently involved with the scheme. For some, as much as they approve of the idea, VTPS just seemed to start up as a new government-based innovation unrelated to community desires. If the scheme is to function as anticipated, then there needs to be discussion at the local level of the aims of VTPS and the role communities are expected to play within it.

## 3.B. RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNITY GOVERNMENTS

Ostensibly, the community governments are the agencies with immediate responsibility for VTPS. At a meeting held in 1981, community government chairmen made a strong statement that they wished to maintain a large portion of control for VTPS, primarily through distributing teacher salaries and having the responsibility for hiring and firing teachers. They have been given that control and responsibility, as well as the responsibility for providing classroom buildings, although some community governments are more efficient at carrying out responsibilities than are others.

Teachers have complained in some cases that their community governments were withholding teacher salaries (sent quarterly by the provincial government), claiming the funds had to be used for another purpose. Part of the problem is due to difficulties of some community governments in managing all funds, not just VTPS salaries. As will be discussed in Chapter 5 on administration, solutions to rectify the problem are being considered, such as setting up a separate account for VTPS funds in each community government.

Because community government chairmen have expressed a desire to take a greater role in the administration of VTPS, such involvement should be encouraged. In a recent VTPS policy meeting of VTPS administrators, supervisors, consultants, and the Teacher Trainer, held in Arawa, it was recommended giving community governments a greater role in monitoring teacher absences and in investigating, with the assistance of the area supervisor, problems which arose in tok ples schools. Community governments should also be encouraged to take a larger role in providing transport for VTPS teachers and supervisors for inservice meetings and supervisory visits (discussed further in Chapter 4), as well as providing many other services needed for the programme.

## 3.C. RELATIONSHIP TO COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

The VTPS teachers interviewed described a positive relationship with the community school teachers and headmasters. They said they frequently talked with community school teachers and often asked advice on teaching methods. Headmasters varied as to the degree they visited VTPS classrooms and/or included VTPS teachers in inservicing, but many lacked a real understanding of the goals and methods of the scheme and others were hampered by not knowing the tok ples of the area. Most, however, reported trying to be as helpful to the programme as possible, an assessment reaffirmed by VTPS teachers. There was only one known instance during the research period of conflict between VTPS and a community school. The alleged reason for the conflict was that the VTPS children's use of tok ples during recess time undermined the headmaster's English-only rule for the community school. The headmaster suggested that perhaps VTPS should be moved from the community school grounds (the school was located between the two villages it serves), and relocated in one or the other feeder villages. A parents and citizens meeting was called to resolve this issue, and parents decided that the school should not be moved since it was presently centrally located. They felt, however, that the headmaster should be supported in his attempt to encourage the speaking of English, and so to resolve the problem VTPS and community school children should either have staggered recess times or be restricted to separate areas of the play-ground.

Some area residents commented to this researcher on the situation, suggesting that the issue discussed at the meeting was not the real problem. It was believed that the headmaster was critical of one of the VTPS teachers, but felt that although VTPS was on 'his' school grounds, he had no right to reprimand or otherwise supervise the teacher. Therefore, he preferred that the VTPS move away from the community school to the village where he would not be confronted daily with the conflict. The dilemma is one which is a significant issue in the VTPS scheme. Should the VTPS be closely affiliated with the community school - under its rules and the headmaster's supervision - or should VTPS be a completely separate entity under the full jurisdiction of 'the community' (however that is defined)?

Initially, VTPS was seen as a completely separate institution from the community school, with separate grounds and separate governance. As the scheme developed communities felt it more practical to locate schools on existing community school campuses (there are two exceptions to this in Buin where for two villages there is no nearby community school), and most communities preferred to operate the school under the same Board of Management as the community school. (They explained, "After all, it's the same parents, isn't it?") Consequently, there was at least a physical proximity between the two institutions, but many headmasters have expressed confusion as to just what their relationship to VTPS should be. While there is no doubt that this relationship is steadily evolving into a number of patterns it may be wise at this early stage to consider the consequences of two possible directions.

The benefit of VTPS' being completely separate from the community school lies in its subsequent ability to be seen as 'special', and clearly separated from 'the government'. It could then possibly become a school which parents and community would see more as their responsibility and become more involved in its day to day operations. Perhaps it could also become a more integral part of the village as it was originally hoped it would be.

On the other hand, closer affiliation with the community school could provide some undeniable benefits, too. Several tok ples schools have suffered high teacher absenteeism, leading community members to eventually complain to the VTPS Supervisor or even to the central office in Arawa. These problems became difficult to sort out because there was no one on site with the responsibility for the teachers. If the community school headmasters took on that responsibility as they do for community school teachers, the problems might be prevented before they become acute. Headmasters could also provide some supervision as it is difficult, especially in Buin, for the supervisors to regularly visit schools. Such supervision could only be of a limited nature at this time, however, because headmasters, as mentioned, are generally unfamiliar with the purposes and methods of VTPS and some posted outside of their language areas cannot understand the local tok ples.

Furthermore, while VTPS has a specific purpose and aims, most people who support those aims would like to see them continued into community school. Complete separation might prevent the kind of cross-fertilization that could influence the community school in a more community-sensitive and culturally-responsive direction. The danger to be guarded against, of course, is that such cross-fertilization leads not to positive changes in the community school, but to a greater bureaucratization and subsequent distancing from the community of VTPS. Finally, should the two schools become more closely linked, coordination of curricular elements could be undertaken more readily. Consultation between Grade 1 and VTPS teachers could provide a VTPS curriculum more relevant in facilitating community school achievement and a Grade 1 curriculum better able to enhance and build upon skills developed in VTPS.

This issue is not one which can, or perhaps even should, be resolved quickly. Different communities will undoubtedly prefer and develop differing levels of VTPS and community school association. While it may be better to let the situation remain somewhat fluid at the local level, it is probably wise to consider some overall guidelines at the central level. For example, does the community school headmaster have any authority over VTPS teachers and if so does he have such authority as an agent of and report back to the BOM, the VTPS area supervisor, the community government, or the provincial government? If not, who is responsible for monitoring absenteeism among teachers, or is that necessary? Is a curricular coordination between VTPS and community schools desired? If so, should this coordination be formalized or merely encouraged?

Some of these issues were discussed at the meeting mentioned above of VTPS administrators held in August, 1982 (see minutes of this meeting in Appendix E), but the resulting suggestions have not been formally adopted by present VTPS administrative staff or approved by the Provincial Education Board (PEB). It is hoped that the final solution of this issue will fall somewhere in the middle of the two options, one which will maintain a maximum of bureaucratic efficiency, with a high degree of educational quality within both VTPS and the community school.

## 3.D. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE COMMUNITY RELATIONSHIPS

In order to increase parental and community involvement in VTPS, the following should be considered:

1. Establishment of community-based committees with the responsibility to oversee and develop community-based aspects of VTPS curriculum, especially that of cultural studies.

2. Development of classroom activities which can draw parents into the programme and take advantage of community knowledge: for example, 'home work' which asks children to find out from parents and older relatives various 'tumbuna' stories or customs which they can then share in the classroom; to watch at home in order to explain in class the making of traditional crafts or foods, including bringing in samples where appropriate; and to construct traditional toys made of coconut fronds or other natural materials (small bows and arrows, 'helicopters', etc.) which they can talk about and display in the classroom.

3. In order to increase the support given to VTPS by Boards of Management, discussion at BOM and Parents and Citizens meetings with representatives from VTPS to clarify the programme's goals, and reiterate the need for and discuss ways of providing financial support at the local level if the programme is to continue.

4. In order to increase their participation in the VTPS programme, additional responsibilities specified for community governments within the scheme, as well as

safe-guards to assist them in effectively carrying out those responsibilities.

5. In order to ensure the smooth operation of the programme, clarification of the relationship of VTPS to the community school and the community school headmaster.

6. In order to increase their ability to be supportive, inservicing of community school headmasters concerning the goals and methods of VTPS and the headmaster's role within the programme.

# Chapter 4

# THE SCHOOL AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

## 4.A. TEACHERS AND TEACHER QUALITY

For the 1982 school year there were 61 VTPS teachers in Buka and Buin (four additional teachers at trial schools in Kieta and in the Hako area of Buka are not included in this number). Only six teachers have had previous teaching experience in community schools, one having attended teachers' college and five older 'permitted' teachers who received brief teacher training after having completed six or seven years of basic schooling. As the following tables giving the basic break-down of teacher characteristics show, the 'average' VTPS teacher is male, 17-22 years old, and a Grade 6 leaver.

### 4.A.1. Selection Process

VTPS teachers are selected by the communities they serve. This selection has taken one of two forms: community government or Board of Management members have either asked individuals to serve, or these agencies have asked for and approved volunteers from the community at large. For the most part, this process appears to be working, although in the past it has generally worked better in Buka than in Buin. In Buka the VTPS teaching staff has remained relatively stable in the two years of the programme's full operation. In Buin, however, there has been considerable teacher turnover, and at least three schools have closed for all or part of a year due to teacher instability.

The reasons for the Buin situation are varied, although high on the list must be the general social disruption of recent years in that area and the consequently high number of young men involved in problems with the law. Indeed, in a dramatic incident in one school, two carloads of policemen arrived to arrest a teacher while the supervisor was present attempting to conduct a routine supervisory observation. Such drama doesn't occur regularly (although there have been a few similar incidents such as having to bail out two teachers at the last minute in order that they might join the other teachers for teacher training at Tinputz), but the difficulties have occurred with enough frequency to create disruption in the Buin teacher ranks.

Table 4.1 VTPS teachers' age and sex

SEX

| SEX | NO | % |
|---|---|---|
| Male | 38 | 62% |
| Female | 23 | 38% |
| TOTAL | 61 | 100% |

AGE

| AGE | NO | % |
|---|---|---|
| 17-22 | 33 | 54% |
| 23-35 | 20 | 33% |
| 36+ | 7 | 11% |
| No information | 1 | 2% |
| TOTAL | 61 | 100% |

Table 4.2 VTPS teachers' education (1982)

HIGHEST GRADE REACHED IN SCHOOL

| GRADE | NO | % |
|---|---|---|
| 6 | 24 | 39% |
| 7 | 9 | 15% |
| 8 | 16 | 26% |
| 9 | 3 | 5% |
| 10 | 5 | 8% |
| Teachers' College | 1 | 2% |
| No information | 3 | 5% |
| TOTAL | 61 | 100% |

Table 4.3 VTPS teachers' marital status

MARITAL STATUS

| | | NO | | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Married Men | | 20* | | 33% |
| Married Women | | 3 | | 5% |
| TOTAL | 23 | | 38% | |
| Unmarried Men | | 12 | | 20% |
| Unmarried Women | | 20 | | 33% |
| TOTAL | 32 | | 53% | |
| No information | | 6 | | 10% |
| TOTAL | | 61 | | 100% |

* one widowed

In some instances, Buin teachers were probably too immature to make good teachers, most likely chosen by their communities in the hope that the experience of teaching would help them to settle down. Sometimes the communities were correct and some young men who were previously involved in 'rascal' activities, have become excellent teachers. In other cases, they were not correct, with predictable outcomes. At this stage, however, it does appear as if the Buin teacher ranks have stabilized and on a whole are performing as well as or better than those in Buka.

### 4.A.2. Teacher Attitudes

Every teacher interviewed expressed satisfaction with his or her work. Teachers believed their work to be important to the community and to the futures of the children in their care. The younger teachers especially felt that they had increased in status as a result of their jobs, the young women noting that boys who had previously teased them now related to them with increased respect, and the young men indicating that they are now being included much more in deliberations concerning community affairs.

The most widespread teacher complaint was chronic late payment of salaries, often as much as a three to four months delay. This is a serious problem which has almost cost the programme some of its best teachers, who, frustrated that they have tried all avenues of getting their pay with no results, have come close to resigning. The problem is especially crucial for married male teachers with children, who, unable to engage in plantation work because of teaching duties, frequently depend completely upon their VTPS pay for monetary income.

### 4.A.3. Quality of Teaching

Teacher quality is never easy to assess, although the ultimate proof must be in the achievement of the students. From that perspective, teacher performance is varied, but on the whole, at least adequate, especially considering the brief training period. In short, the worst teachers appeared no worse than poor community school teachers and the best managed to produce children who were able to perform in reading and writing (including writing original stories - see Appendix F for examples from Laitaro School in Buin) as well as advanced Grade 1 and Grade 2 students in the United States.

Twenty-six teachers were observed and evaluated by this researcher using criteria used in teacher supervision at the University of Massachusetts, USA (including factors such as child involvement, lesson preparation, clarity, and review and summary). Of these, eight were rated very good, nine good; five fair; and four poor. All observations and judgments were made with no prior knowledge of the level of formal education achieved by the teachers. It is significant to note that there was no relationship between quality of teacher performance and number of years of formal education. Because many Grade 6 leavers far out-performed some high school graduates, it is strongly recommended that no attempt be made, as has been occasionally suggested, to restrict the VTPS teaching force to those with Grade 8 or Grade 10 education. The only statement which may be made relating level of education to teacher performance is that former teachers who were older (i.e. did not attend teacher's college) appeared to have difficulty using VTPS methods, presumably because they had previous training and a long history in using drastically different instructional methodologies.

One other aspect of VTPS teachers which has consistently been mentioned by a steady stream of observers is the enthusiasm with which they approach their work. Paul Songo, then national Secretary of Education, commented that VTPS classrooms appeared considerably more energetic and exciting than did most community school classrooms. This researcher can endorse that statement, having frequently observed a level of enthusiasm and interest on the part of many VTPS teachers and students seldom seen in other learning environments. As for the aspects of teacher performance needing improvement, several areas were frequently observed. Teachers needed more teaching aids to reinforce lessons, as these tended to be presented only by lecture or by the use of the blackboard or primer books. Children's work was rarely displayed, nor were there any other classroom displays. Teachers tended to waste much valuable classroom time as they wrote primer lessons on the blackboard instead of having prepared charts earlier. Lessons were structured so that teachers monopolized the talk in the classrooms providing little opportunity for child language development through talking. About half of the teachers observed had difficulty planning lessons. And about one third of the teachers were not able to correctly fill out administrative monthly report forms. Most of these problems are further discussed in the section to follow on curriculum and materials.

One final word on teacher quality. The supervisors in both language areas and several community leaders have expressed concern that one factor directly related to the quality of teachers' performance is whether teachers have, in addition to their teaching duties, other major positions which demand their attention and time. It was often stated, "You can't serve two masters at the same time". While it is indeed true that several instances arose during the research period where teachers were less diligent about their teaching duties because they were involved elsewhere, or where there was some conflict about their two positions, it was not the case that all incidences of teachers serving dual roles presented problems. Because this issue was of such concern to so many community members, however, some official statement on the question may be called for.

## 4.B. MATERIALS, METHODS AND CURRICULUM

The VTPS day begins at 8.00 a.m. and ends at noon. The subject area which receives the greatest percentage of time in school day, approximately 25%, is literacy skill - reading and writing readiness in Year 1 and reading and writing in Year 2. Other subjects include maths, cultural studies, religious instruction, creative expression, science and nature study, picture time, story telling, free play, and health. Timetabling varies from school to school, although it is more consistent in Buka where a set timetable was developed by the S.I.L. workers and the area supervisor (See Appendix G). Buin teachers, have been allowed to devise their own timetables, most of which are similar to that of Buka.

There was confusion on the part of some teachers in both areas concerning timetabling. One teacher read the daily schedule activity of "maths" as "match" and consequently taught no mathematics, but played the same matching game with his Year 1 for one half hour each day (this incident reflects a general language problem to be discussed later). Two other teachers operated under the mistaken belief that while Year 1 was to be composed of many subject areas, Year 2 should be devoted solely to reading and writing. Their classes spent two exhausting hours each day reading and two hours writing without stop. Other than these incidents, most classes followed an acceptable schedule, although teachers understandably tended to spend more time on subjects in which they were confident and less on subjects in which they were not.

### 4.B.1. Reading and Writing Readiness (Year 1)

#### a) Programme Description

The materials for this subject area were developed by S.I.L. linguists, Jan Allen in Buka (Halia language) and Margie Griffin in Buin (Telei language) in cooperation with local residents. The Buka materials consist of five pre-primer books and teachers' guides, and the Buin materials, of thirteen shorter pre-primers and a teacher's guide.

The programme in both language areas includes three kinds of activities:

1. Speaking and hearing exercises which include telling stories, games with groups of words, teacher-read stories, and a set of hearing drills in which children are to recognize the same or different first, middle, or last syllables of several words. Those activities are presented in the teachers' guides.

2. Seeing same and difference. The pre-primer books provide the primary source of exercises for this skill (see sample page in Appendix H). Other activities include matching card games and, later on, story charts. The story charts use the 'look-say' method of teaching, different from the phonic analytic approach used in the Year 2 primers, but similar to the method used in Grade 1 to teach English reading.

3. Pre-writing. The method being used is a variation of one introduced a few years ago by an S.I.L. worker working with adults in the Highlands. Children are taught by contrasts, practicing both the right and the wrong way to form letters, but told at the end of the lesson which is which.

The pre-primers of both language areas are constructed similarly. Although different in number, there are approximately the same total number of pages in both complete sets. One major difference between the two sets of primer books is the format. Each Telei book has the same set of directions throughout, i.e. each page in Book 1 asks children to find a picture in a row which matches one in a box at the left of the row; Book 2 teaches the same skill, but throughout the book children must look from top to bottom instead of from left to right; Book 3 uses the same format as Book 2 but with letters instead of pictures, etc. the Buka books, on the other hand, mix directions within one book. For example, two pages ask the children to look left to right, the next two might ask them to look up and down; or a few pages ask for what is the same, and the next few pages ask for what is different.

Teachers' guides in the two areas are also structured differently. The Buka Halia guides are small pamphlets, one for each pre-primer, and identical in colour and size to the accompanying children's books. Each page gives instruction for one day's lessons in speaking and hearing, seeing same and difference, and pre-writing. All directions to the teachers are in English.

The Buin Telei guide is one large volume divided into two sections. The first section includes a review of much of the material covered in the training course at Tinputz -- how to handle the various kinds of lessons, sample printing for the Telei alphabet, syllables of the Telei language, and detailed instructions for making various teaching aids and games. The second section gives the daily lessons just as do the Halia materials. All directions are in English and Telei.

b) Programme Effectiveness

In general, the materials appear to be accomplishing what they were designed for - preparing children to achieve literacy by the end of Year 2. There are, however, some issues which deserve comment, and which could assist in training teachers to use the materials and later in developing materials for new language areas:

Use of Books. Teachers frequently have great difficulty monitoring children's use of books. Because books must be used for several years, children are not allowed to mark their answers with crayons or pencils, but must point to the correct answer or (as suggested in the teacher's guide but seldom followed by teachers) cover the answers with small stones or shells. Obviously it is difficult for teachers to check all individuals' work, especially when children are merely pointing to answers, a problem made more difficult by large classes.

One possible solution to this problem is to train teachers to combine this period with, say, free play time, pre-writing, or creative expression, allowing half the children to be engaged in independent activities while the other half works with the teacher. Children who understand the concept under study well may also act as teacher's helpers. Training should also strongly encourage teachers to follow the suggestion of using shells or stones as markers, as this also makes checking children's work easier. Another difficulty with the books arose in Buka, where directions for the activities changed from page to page. This confused many children, and teachers spent most of the period trying to get children to understand the directions, and little time on teaching the actual skill. Lessons, then, often went slowly and with great difficulty, reducing the amount of material able to be covered. In books produced in the future for other language areas, and for Halia books when they are revised, a format similar to that used in Buin (where directions remain constant for a large block of lessons) should be considered.

Pre-Writing. There has been much criticism by VTPS teachers and other personnel of using a method which teaches children to write an incorrect form before writing a correct form. There was such adverse feeling in Buin about this method that it was virtually discontinued there. Although perhaps appropriate with the adults for whom it was originally developed, it does seem inappropriate for use with young children. More emphasis should probably be given to producing correct forms, including supplemental activities which teachers do not appear to use, such as tracing the letter in the air prior to writing, using shells or stones to form the letter correctly on the floor, or writing the letter on their chalkboards with a finger dipped in water before using chalk or pencil.

It has been suggested by John Rule of Dauli Teachers' College that children should engage in finger flexibility exercises before beginning formal writing (such as finger plays, string games, paper folding and tearing, free scribbling, etc). A few of these are included in the activities developed by Rachel Kaetavara. However, it should be noted that there are numerous activities in which the children already engage (jackstones, making toys with coconut fronds, simple weaving, and stripping sago for making brooms, for instance) which increase finger flexibility.

Speaking and Hearing. The activities in this area will probably provide children with the auditory skills needed to approach learning to read through a phonically-based programme. Some activities, however, appeared to be very difficult for Year 1 children, especially those which asked children to discern the same or different sounds in the middle of several words (**alia, baliau, alita**) or to identify which word had an 'extra' sound (**habi, habin**). It appeared that children were not able to think of words as a succession of sounds but only as whole units. Too, they may have had difficulty with the general concepts of 'first', 'middle', 'last'. It was suggested by the Buka Supervisor that children first be given the opportunity to see the relationships (identifying first, middle, and last figures on the blackboard, or children in a row) and next, identifying spoken words as first, middle, or last in a series (for example, calling three children's names and asking which name called was in the middle or first). Other aids should be suggested to teachers to assist them when they run into difficulty with these exercises, as many seem to just give up in frustration. Consideration should also be given to transferring some of these more difficult activities to Year 2.

It is also suggested that rhyming games and exercises be included in this part of the curriculum. Children must later have considerable facility in differentiating vowel sounds in order to hear, for example, the difference in such syllables as **li**, **le**, **la** and in hearing the similarity between **le**, **se**, and **te**. This proved difficult for many Year 2 children observed.

Teachers' Guides. The small, one-guide-to-one-primer format used in the Halia materials in Buka seemed very convenient for teachers to use, and might be considered for other future materials (See Appendix I). Teachers appreciated the daily lesson plans, as these made planning and teaching the material easier. One problem in the Halia guides, however, was language of presentation. Teachers in Buka frequently thought they understood the directions, but when this researcher asked them questions in Tok Pisin, they had not grasped the main idea. The choice of language is difficult here, for teachers say they don't want the guides in Tok Pisin - the obvious language choice - because, having been schooled in English, they find Tok Pisin difficult to read and not precise enough to easily follow. Tok ples is difficult because it lacks the vocabularly to discuss many technical issues; then too, teachers are not accustomed to reading complex directions in their own language. English, though precise, is at least the third language of the teachers, and many read it with great difficulty.

The best solution appears to be that used in Buin, putting the instructions into both English and tok ples. Buin teachers, when asked, say that they use both language sections of the guide, switching from one to the other when they find something explained in one language confusing. Although time consuming, it may be worthwhile to produce all teachers' materials in both English and the local language, thus achieving the greatest precision with the greatest potential for comprehension.

One other recommendation concerning the Year 1 teachers' guides is that there be better coordination between the guides and the activities suggested by the Teacher Trainer, Rachel Kaetavara. At present it is difficult for teachers to know when to slot in the latter valuable activities, and it would be a loss to the programme should they not be included.

## 4.B.2. Reading and Writing (Year 2)

### a) Programme Description

These materials were also developed by S.I.L. linguists in the two language areas, with the assistance of local speakers and with pictures of local items drawn by Buin or Buka artists. The Buin Telei materials consist of eight primers and a teacher's guide, and the Buka Halia materials consist of five primers and five teacher's guides. The reading method is based on a method developed by Dr. Sarah Gudshinsky, an S.I.L. literacy consultant, and used widely in adult literacy. It is an analytical phonic method which teaches by contrast and comparison. Children learn to read syllables and then build these into words and sentences. Because tok ples languages are written in a phonemically regular form (as opposed to English which is irregular), such a method is considered efficient in teaching reading.

There are three kinds of lessons in the Buin primers: keyword lessons, grammar lessons, and expansion lessons. The first kind of lesson teaches a new letter or syllable through a 'keyword' presented with a picture. Grammar lessons teach grammatical structures of the language. Expansion lessons are similar to revision lessons as they review the most recently taught elements by giving children practice in using them in new words and stories (see sample pages in Appendix J). The Halia primers, however, have only the first two kinds of lessons. (the grammar lesson is called a 'functor lesson'.)

There are seven steps for each lesson, the first six of which are in the primers:

1. (A) Approach introduces a new element (letter or grammatical item) in a word or sentence.

2. (B) Build-up combines new letters with already known

letters to make new syllables.

3. (C) Comparison focuses the children's attention on the constancy of a new letter -- it will always look the same and sound the same.

4. (D) Difference contrasts the new letter with previously learned letters to show that the part of a syllable which looks different always sounds different.

5. (E) Expansion builds new syllables into words.

6. (F) Fluency provides sentences and stories to practice a new element and to make its recognition automatic.

7. (G) Graphics teaches children to write a new letter correctly and know the sound it represents. Children also copy sentences from the stories they read, and write phrases from dictation.

b) Programme Effectiveness

As discussed in Chapter 2, the Year 2 literacy programme appears to be accomplishing its aim - most children tested are able to perform well on material already covered. One difficulty, however, appears to be that in many cases (especially observed in Buka), only a small fraction of the programmed material is actually covered during the school year. This means, the Buka children in one school who only completed Primer 1 covered syllables using only about 8 of the 24 letters of the Halia alphabet. Hopefully, these children will be able to continue with the primers in Grade 1, but that, of course, depends on whether the Grade 1 teacher speaks the local language and can receive some training in the VTPS teaching method.

But what is the cause of such a slow pace? It appears that it is not necessarily due to the materials themselves, because at least one of the better Buka schools was able to move well into Primer 5. Undoubtedly some of the problem lies with the inexperience or lack of ability of some individual teachers, but some difficulties appear to be generalizable:

Difficulties with the Method. Many teachers observed were unsure of the steps in teaching a lesson. Furthermore, several tended to teach as though they were teaching using a 'look-say' method, such as that typically used to teach

English reading. These teachers would read all the syllables, words and sentences themselves, then have students repeat them numerous times. Mistakes were quickly corrected by the teacher and there would be no attempt to have children try to decode words by attending to syllables or vowels. (One teacher even seemed to believe that children had achieved literacy if they could repeat everything he read.) This kind of instruction is highly inappropriate in an analytic method, although it is likely that its cause is teachers imitating the way they themselves were taught to read English in community school. It is very important that inservices be conducted to review the teaching method and correct faults which have developed.

Difficulties with the Materials. A general difficulty for schools in both language areas is that few if any classrooms during 1982 had sufficient primers for all the children. This necessitated writing all primer lessons on the blackboard, a handicap not easily overcome by these minimally trained teachers, who, in general, performed remarkably well under the circumstances. Primers have now been printed and distributed, so that problem should be resolved next year.

A difficulty in the Halia primers is that there is little structured revision, which the children seem to sorely need. Inservice should be provided to assist teachers in developing revision lessons. Teachers also frequently have difficulty in pacing lessons. Sometimes they were observed to plough ahead whether or not children understood the subject matter, and other times they continued in a lesson well after most of the class had mastered it. (One young Buka teacher was well into Primer 2 in May when this researcher, after a few informal tests with the children, pointed out to her that it seemed few children recognized the words in the lesson. She said she realized that only five children could read it, but that was the lesson she supposed to be on on that date, so that's what she taught). In order to address this problem, it is suggested that mastery tests be developed and administered at at least two points in each Halia primer, and at the completion of each Telei primer.

Problems in lesson pacing also arise when teachers spend the greater part of each lesson time writing the material on the blackboard. Teachers must be encouraged to write the necessary material on the blackboard before class starts, or better yet, to write it on large paper charts which can be displayed and used again.

Another difficulty with the Year 2 primer programme is that it is too 'book-bound'. There are no language development activities, experience stories, reading games, or other non-book activities. Exacerbating the problem, there are seldom any books or magazines around the classrooms for children to look at or talk about. This problem has very recently been tackled by Gay Brown, S.I.L. worker, who has prepared an excellent supplement for the Year 2 teachers' guides, including games, directions and ideas for making simple books, ideas for reading charts, language development activities, and so forth. As this supplement is distributed around the province and inservices are provided in its use, the problem should begin to be alleviated.

Teachers should also be encouraged to ask community school headmasters for any unused books with pictures that can be used for setting up a library corner. In order for these ideas to be implemented, it is also important that the provincial government assist the effort by providing some supplies with which teachers can make games and teaching aids, and perhaps locating surplus magazines or pamphlets which may be stored in various government storerooms. Many schools, too, have no paper or pencils -- a real drawback in adequately developing a creative learning environment.

Writing. Children appear to be progressing well in handwriting, a fact commented upon by many community school personnel who have observed the writing of VTPS children. Consideration should be given, however, to having children form letters on two spaces instead of one, as that seems to be what is required in Grade 1 and would make for an easier transition to community school.

One problem with the writing programme, however, is that too much time is spent merely copying words. Children half-way through the second year can begin to write their own stories or sentences instead of always copying words from the blackboard. This was suggested in some of the Buin schools visited by this researcher, and the excellent results mentioned previously can be found in Appendix F. Such activities develop children's abilities in numerous areas.

An additional suggestion was made by a teacher who recommends the use of 'fill-in-the-blanks' for handwriting practice, in which children must choose one of two words to complete a sentence written on the blackboard before copying it. This allows children to practice reading comprehension and thinking skills as well as penmanship. As this teacher aptly expressed it, "There's reading and writing and that's all. This programme just doesn't ask children to **think** enough".

Because of the lack of paper and pencils in many schools, all penmanship must be practiced on blackboards with chalk. this situation severely handicaps the adequate teaching of penmanship.

### 4.B.3. Maths

Teachers say they find the teaching of mathematics difficult because as yet, there is no syllabus. It was originally envisioned that the programme would consist of a combination of traditional and modern mathematics. Many teachers make a fine effort at teaching base ten counting in tok ples and in teaching the various traditional systems for counting different objects. Where they run into difficulty is in devising a sufficient variety of activities to teach these skills. Additional games and teaching aids should be developed in teacher training and inservices to make these activities exciting for children.

Once children have learned basic counting, however, the programme really lags. VTPS provides a wonderful opportunity to introduce many mathematical concepts in tok ples which children will encounter in Grade 1, such as beginning addition and subtraction; measurement using body parts, leaves, or sticks; the concepts of less than, greater than, and equal to; etc. There is a tendency to treat VTPS children as though they are of true pre-school age (5-6), but by the time children are in Year 2, they are at least 8 years old and most are capable of greater conceptual challenges than are usually asked of them.

It is recommended that a mathematics syllabus be developed which is both challenging and fun for children. One source of ideas for such a syllabus is Grade 1 teachers who should be consulted on what concepts seem to be particularly difficult for Grade 1 students to master. These concepts could then be translated into tok ples, and games and other interesting activities developed to teach them.

In line with this suggestion, it is probably necessary to decide if numerals and other mathematical symbols will be introduced in VTPS, as presently there is considerable variance on this issue in the schools. It should be noted that whether VTPS teaches numerals or not, many of the children have already learned them from parents or older siblings, and use them when playing out-of-school games.

Rachel Kaetavara is presently working on a general teacher's guide which should address many of these issues. It is important, however, that she do this in collaboration with the VTPS supervisors who have more contact with the teachers and VTPS children, and who, as former community school teachers, have important ideas on the matter. The only way this can be accomplished is if finances are made available for travel so that the three can meet, probably best in conjunction with the Assistant Coordinator and/or Coordinator.

### 4.B.4. Cultural Studies, Nature Studies, Religious Instruction and Other Subject Areas

Cultural Studies has been discussed specifically in Chapter 2. Additional comments for other subject areas are similar as for maths. Teachers complain that they do not know what to teach because there is no syllabus, and the suggestions given them in teacher training are too few to comprise a two-year curriculum. The teacher's guide in preparation by Rachel Kaetavara should help, but it will likely be sometime before it is completed. In the meantime, another task may be productive. This researcher observed some excellent lessons on these subjects in various classrooms, however, each teacher only had few such good ideas. An inservice could be conducted in which teachers are directed to bring in their two best lesson plans for each subject. By discussing one or two subject areas per day, the teachers could share their ideas and work together at devising new lessons. All ideas could be written up to be shared amongst teachers of the area, and forwarded to Tinputz for inclusion in the teacher's guide. Such teacher involvement in curriculum planning has proved very successful in other teacher training programmes.

### 4.B.5. Additional Note on Curriculum Methods and Materials

One easily rectified fault common to many VTPS teachers is their tendency to conduct all lessons within the confines of the classroom. Many of the lessons are better conducted out of doors where natural materials are readily available for nature study, mathematics, and cultural studies. Then too, outdoor lessons are exciting for children, giving them a break from classroom confinement, and are more likely to make VTPS seem less a separate institution and more a part of the village community, as it was originally intended.

A second recommendation is that teachers be encouraged to create classroom displays. These could consist of collections of leaves, shells, rocks, etc. used by the children in nature study; stories and pictures they have written and drawn; or crafts constructed during cultural studies or creative arts periods. Displays make the classroom more interesting to the children and more meaningful to parents when they visit.

## 4.C. TEACHER TRAINING AND SUPERVISION

### 4.C.1. Preservice

Initial training for VTPS teachers has been conducted at the Tinputz Training Centre (although the first course in 1979 to prepare the eight teachers for the four trial schools was held at the S.I.L. Centre in Ukarumpa). Thus far there have been five training sessions conducted at Tinputz. The course preceding Year 1 teaching is six weeks in duration, with about half that time devoted to general pre-school teaching skills conducted by the VTPS teacher trainer, and the other half to literacy skills for the teachers themselves - learning the orthography of their language and practicing reading and writing it - conducted by S.I.L. staff. The course preceding Year 2 training consists of training in the use of the primer materials and some teaching skills for Year 2 non-literacy-related subjects. This three-week period is also taught jointly by S.I.L. staff and the VTPS Teacher Trainer. Both Year 1 and Year 2 courses are planned so that the last 1-2 weeks overlap with the opening weeks of the Tinputz demonstration school (run during the rest of the year by Rachel Kaetavara and two assistants), so as to give the teacher trainees practice actually working with children.

This researcher was only able to attend a few days of a Tinputz course, so most comments are drawn from subsequent teacher interviews. One comment made by the course instructors themselves, however, is that content and methods for the two sections of the course - literacy and general teaching issues should be better integrated. Presumably one reason this had not been done results from a lack of pre-course communication. Each time a course has run it has been conducted by different S.I.L. representatives. That factor, along with little available VTPS travel money has made co-ordination difficult. Now that the problem has been identified, however, the course instructors can attempt to resolve it amongst themselves.

The teachers questioned were pleased with the Tinputz training and believed it to be of great benefit to them once they began actual teaching. Their two most frequent complaints were numbers of mosquitoes and fear of local plantation workers (there had been two murders involving these workers near the time of a training course). The former complaint is a very serious one as many teachers contracted very serious cases of malaria, and the years following the 1981 and 1982 courses found protracted teacher absenteeism for that reason. Additional efforts must be made to curtail the mosquito population at the Centre and/or to give teachers protection from mosquito bites.

About one-half of the teachers questioned believed the six-week Year 1 preservice to be sufficient, and the other half preferred that 2-4 weeks be added to that time. Teachers who said they thought the training time was sufficient were mainly Buin teachers, who, under the direction of the Buin S.I.L. linguist, were involved in many more inservice sessions after initial training than were the Buka teachers. Prior to the Buin leg of the research, the issue of training schedules was discussed at the previously mentioned VTPS policy meeting in Arawa (see Appendix E for minutes). Because of the research results to that date, it was decided to consider extending first year training to eight weeks. After the Buin research, however, a modified recommendation would be that the initial training period could probably remain at six weeks, if intense on-site inservice followed initial training.

Most teachers said they thought the Year 2 preservice course is sufficient in duration. As discussed previously, they stressed a need for more training and ideas teaching non-literacy related subjects. Buin teachers also expressed a need for a more detailed study of Buin grammar. It was also observed that all teachers needed more training in how to use natural materials in their lessons.

### 4.C.2. Inservice

Inservices have varied in number and kind according to the wishes of the area supervisor. This researcher was able to attend an inservice meeting in Buka and one in Buin. The meeting in Buka, held at the end of the first term, was concerned with clarifying the procedures for filling out monthly reports and other administrative matters, and, to a lesser extent, with sharing ideas for cultural studies. The Buin meeting, held at the end of the third quarter, consisted of a general review of curriculum, timetabling and planning.

Both sessions were attended by fewer than half of the area teachers. Supervisors felt this to be due to communication and transport problems. Many teachers, therefore, totally missed out on the valuable information discussed. (Because non-attendance was judged to be not the fault of the teachers, no salary deductions were made). Some steps should be taken to avoid such wastage. Firstly, timetables for inservice should be set early in the year, and teachers, as well as community governments, alerted to the dates. Then, the community governments could be asked to assist in providing transport, something they would likely be willing to do if alerted in advance (as witnessed by the excellent cooperation of community governments in getting teachers to the 1983 Year 2 training course at Tinputz).

Apart from the low attendance rate, the biggest problem with the inservices observed by this researcher was the lack of opportunity for teachers to practice teaching skills. Most of the sessions consisted of lectures and discussion, with a good deal of copying materials from the blackboard. A more useful structure would be having large blocks of time (a morning or an afternoon) devoted to eliciting ideas from teachers for developing lessons in one subject area, with two additional large blocks devoted to actually teaching these lessons to each other (peer teaching) and critiqueing the lessons as a group. Review and practice of the method to correctly teach primer lessons is also necessary. Supervisors also should be given written guidelines or brief inservice training in how to structure inservice sessions for teachers.

One method of inservicing teachers which was successfully used in Buin while Margie Griffin was responsible for supervising teachers there was regional instead of central meetings. Strong consideration should be given to reinstituting such a structure. Meetings could be held in community government catchment areas for the teachers of that area only. This could reduce transport problems, as well as provide a small group of teachers who could be more easily managed for demonstration and practice teaching sessions. Such an arrangement could also allow the training to be held at one school where children could be present for at least some part of the training session. Teachers could then actually try out new ideas with children. Such regional meetings need not replace larger meetings, but could supplement them. If the supervisor preferred, larger meetings could consist primarily of discussion, with practice teaching reserved for the regional meetings. These would need to be organized well in advance to give time for organizing transport and school schedules.

One other suggestion is that travel be provided so that

Rachel Kaetavara, the VTPS teacher trainer, could visit local inservice meetings. Many teachers expressed a desire for her to "come and see if we're doing all the things she taught us right". Such interaction could also assist Mrs. Kaetavara in better structuring the pre-service training sessions.

### 4.C.3. Supervision

Thus far supervision of teachers has been inadequate. Young, inexperienced teachers need and desire direction and support. Although, as previously discussed, the performance of most teachers has been remarkably good under a multitude of trying circumstances, almost all express the need for more in-class supervision.

The primary reason for the lack of supervision is a problem of transportation. The Buka supervisor was previously dependent on the community government car from his village. When that vehicle became inoperable at the beginning of 1982, supervisory visits all but ceased completely. The Buin supervisor, brand new to the job in 1982 and left completely on his own when the S.I.L. linguist left the area a month after his beginning work, had to face his new task with little knowledge of the program and no transport. His was an especially trying situation as Buin roads are notoriously bad, floods are a common phenomenon, and the 30 schools are spread over a very large area. He was occasionally able to accompany the Buin school inspector on community school visits, but this was infrequent as the inspector himself had no vehicle. Both supervisors found the transport situation frustrating, so much so that at least one considered resigning.

There are several possibilities for alleviating the transport problem:

a) Provide money for government pool transport for the supervisors

This could work in Buin, where the supervisor is based in town, but would be more difficult in Buka where the supervisor is village-based, some distance away from Buka Passage. In any case, this would be a rather expensive proposition.

b) Provide each supervisor with inexpensive transport of his own, such as a motorbike

The Buin supervisor, especially, has requested such a solution. It would certainly give the supervisor much more independence of movement and would not be prohibitively costly to operate.

c) Request community government vehicles to provide transport for the supervisors

This would have to be organised well in advance to give the community governments time to plan, and would likely necessitate several days transport for each community government as no more than two schools can be effectively supervised in a day even if the schools are situated nearby to each other and not far from the supervisor's base. If schools are more distant, that number could be reduced to only one per day.

d) Some combination of the above

It is not possible to say here what the best solution would be, but some effort **must** be made to allow supervisors to visit schools. It is highly cost ineffective and defeats the whole purpose of the position to pay supervisors salaries and then provide no way for them to make supervisory visits.

Once the transport problem is settled it would also be valuable to standardize a procedure for visits. The former coordinator devised a report form to be used for supervisory visits, but more detailed instructions on the use of that form are needed. (One source of ideas for clarifying supervisory procedures is a recent book entitled **Bilingual Education: An Experience in Peruvian Amazonia.** edited by Mildred Larson and Patricia Davis.) Such standardization could help to lessen a problem shared to a different degree by both supervisors. To some extent, appropriate modes of North Solomons behaviour conflict with the supervisory role. One supervisor suggested to this researcher that it was extremely rude to tell an adult that his or her behaviour was incorrect. Given that cultural rule, it appeared difficult for the supervisors to both uphold their culture and carry out their supervisory roles. It is not appropriate for this researcher, a foreigner to suggest ways to address this problem, but it should be considered directly by the supervisors and other VTPS personnel in order to come to some culturally appropriate solution. The standardization of supervisory procedures could also assist in finding the best solution. Developing a supervisor's handbook is also worth consideration. This researcher found both supervisors to be confused on different issues as to what their tasks should specifically consist of. As more supervisors are hired for more language areas, or if present supervisors leave their positions, that confusion can only increase.

### 4.D. BUILDING AND EQUIPMENT

Classroom buildings for VTPS are presently to be provided by the communities served by the school. At this time a large number of VTPS classes are housed in unused community school classrooms. In the first two years of the programme these classrooms were left vacant because Grade 1 and Grade 2 children who would have ordinarily gone to community school were instead in VTPS. Now that the initial start up period is over, buildings specifically for VTPS need to be provided where they had not been before. In many cases, these new classrooms are constructed with materials provided by the community governments (sometimes using the provincial government's kina-for-kina scheme) and labour is provided by parents and other community members. Sometimes buildings are constructed of bush materials, which necessitates little capital outlay.*

In the schools observed, most buildings were adequate. The exceptions were Hahela, where one classroom was used for both Year 1 and Year 2 classes: Hamatana, where the dirt floor flooded when it rained and children had to wade through mud and puddles to get to the blackboard; Hanahan, where the classrooms were poorly lit; Gogohe, where the old mission home-science building used for VTPS leaked badly when it rained; and Hakets, where although the newly constructed building was beautifully executed, the space was too small for two large classes of children. This researcher was told later in the school year that all of the above mentioned problems were soon to be corrected, but the outcome at the time of this writing is not yet known. (Obviously, no comment can be made on the many VTPS schools which were not visited.)

There were complaints that other schools lacked toilets and water supplies for VTPS children. It would perhaps be advisable that general guidelines about classroom requirements (size, lighting, wall space, storage space, water supply, etc.) be prepared by VTPS supervisors or central administration to assist communities in planning and constructing buildings.

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*While it has been suggested that VTPS buildings be constructed of bush materials, most communities object for three reasons: they need regular maintenance; they are thought to be less prestigious; and bush material should be left for local residents in areas where it is scarce.

Thus far, most basic equipment has been supplied directly by the provincial government or indirectly through 'establishment grants' paid to community governments for each new school (since phased out). This has included at least one large blackboard per classroom and small blackboards for each child (however, some of the larger classes had insufficient numbers of the latter). Classrooms were also supposed to be provided with a table and chair for each teacher, although many were not. Frequently lacking too, was cupboard space for storing materials and supplies. Many printed and teacher-made materials were haphazardly stored in boxes on classroom floors, subject to deterioration and destruction by insects and rodents. Furthermore, because many classrooms are of open design, the lack of lockable cupboards means there is no safe place to store consummable supplies. This situation has led to a great deal of avoidable wastage, and should be rectified.

Most classrooms observed did not have student desks. This, however did not seem to be a problem for teachers or for children, who sat informally on the concrete or bamboo floor. The lack of student desks also assisted teachers in conducting instructional games and cultural activities for which open space is needed.

## 4.E. RECOMMENDATIONS TO IMPROVE THE SCHOOLS AND INSTRUCTIONAL PROGRAMME

1. In order to assure the selection and retention of good teachers:

    a) No attempt should be made to limit the teaching force to those with secondary or higher formal education, as many Grade 6 leavers exhibit a high level of teacher performance.

    b) The reasons for the delays in payment of teacher salaries should be identified and rectified.

2. In order to improve the training of teachers:

    a) Opportunities for meetings between the area supervisors, teacher trainer, relevant S.I.L. staff, and central administration should be provided so that they may coordinate the teacher training program.

    b) Additional teacher training in the areas of maths, cultural studies and other subjects that are non-literacy-based should be provided, and the teacher's guide for those areas completed.

c) Frequent reviews and practice sessions of the primer teaching method should be conducted.

d) Preservice training time should be lengthened, or an intensified inservice programme developed.

e) More and localized inservice with greater opportunities for practicing teaching skills should be provided.

f) Some form of mosquito control should be provided for the Tinputz Training Centre.

3. In order to improve the supervision of teachers:

   a) Better transport should be provided so that supervisors are able to visit the schools under their jurisdiction (specific transport suggestions listed in section 4.C.3).

   b) Training for supervisors in conducting supervisory visits and inservice meetings should be provided, and the publication of a supervisor's handbook considered.

4. In order to improve the classroom performance of teachers:

   a) Teachers should be involved in some aspects of curriculum development (as detailed in sections 4.B.3 & 4.C.2.).

   b) Bilingual teachers' guides in English and tok ples should be produced.

   c) Teachers should be encouraged to expand the scope of their teaching programmes so that the literacy component of the programme is less book bound and instructional activities are not confined to the classroom, but make use of village resources.

   d) Additional basic supplies - papers, pencils, scissors, crayons - should be provided for all schools.

   e) Specific suggestions mentioned in the text for curriculum improvement should be implemented.

5. In order to improve the construction and equipping of VTPS classrooms:

    a) Building guidelines regarding matters such as floor space, lighting, wall space, water supply, etc.) should be provided to each community to assist them in planning and constructing classrooms.

    b) Sufficient numbers of small blackboards, a table and chair for each teacher, and a lockable storage area should be provided for each classroom.

# CHAPTER 5

# ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF ROLES

## 5.A. ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE

Because the VTPS scheme began in an experimental manner under the North Solomons Education Research Project, its administrative structure has been gradually evolving. However, the broad structure recommended by the research team and established at the end of 1979 has proved a practical and adequate one. This structure, as amended for a draft Four Year Plan in 1981, provides a starting point to see the directions in which administration of the scheme has been moving (See Table 5.1 ).

One feature of this structure, which was characteristic of the years 1980-81 when VTPS remained an experimental scheme under the overall direction of the research project, was the attempt at a non-heirarchical form of organisation at senior levels. During the first year of operation, planning for the scheme was done by a steering committee composed of the VTPS Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator, the Coordinator of the research project (NSERP), and the Education Division's Senior Professional Assistant (Planner). Members of the VTPS team, including the Teacher Trainer at Tinputz, carried out their duties relatively independently, working together with S.I.L. staff and field supervisors, and meeting fairly regularly to discuss the progress of the scheme.

There were several reasons which account for this approach to management of the scheme. In part, it reflected university ideas uncharacteristic of the public service. The composition of the staff itself, however, was an important consideration. The first Coordinator, Mr Levi Golu, came to the project as an experienced and able former community school headmaster and inspector, who had been transferred to the Education Department's Waigani headquarters. The Assistant Coordinator, Ms Ruth Kovoho, was a university graduate and high school teacher with less administrative experience but obvious potential. The Teacher Trainer, Mrs Rachel Kaetavara, previously manageress of Kihili Vocational Centre and then teacher trainer for the United Church pre-school program was an experienced and respected figure in her field. In addition, the S.I.L. members who worked with this staff were professionally qualified linguists and educators, as was the research project Coordinator whose task it was to see the scheme established and then transferred to the Education Division's management.

Under these circumstances, it appeared appropriate for relationships between staff to be characterised by attitudes of equality and professional respect for each other's work as far as possible, and the influence from the research project was aimed at encouraging team cooperation and avoiding competitiveness.

During its second year of operation, as the scheme became more integrated with the work of the Education Division, a natural tendency for it to conform more closely to the heirarchical outlook of the public service began to be evident, as the Coordinator, gaining confidence and with support from the Assistant Secretary for Education, began to assert his authority over the scheme. In 1982 the scheme was formally integrated within the Education Division, shortly after the Assistant Coordinator left for two years of study at the University of Hawaii. The research coordinator assumed the role of consultant, and the steering committee was in effect replaced by an annual staff policy and planning workshop instituted by the VTPS Coordinator. The Coordinator himself, Teacher Trainer, supervisors and research/evaluation staff participated in the first workshop in August, 1982.

Shortly after the workshop the Coordinator resigned, and the Assistant Coordinator was appointed to his post. The scheme was run in the interim by an Acting Assistant Coordinator, Mr Paul Tsube, while the new Coordinator completed her studies in Hawaii, before taking up the post in July, 1983. While the post of Coordinator is now clearly the senior and authoritative office in the scheme under the Assistant Secretary for Education, (see Table 5.2), the past experience and outlook of the new Coordinator make it likely that a cooperative team organisation will be retained, and this should be to the benefit of the scheme.

Table 5.1 Original proposed VTPS administrative structure (1981)

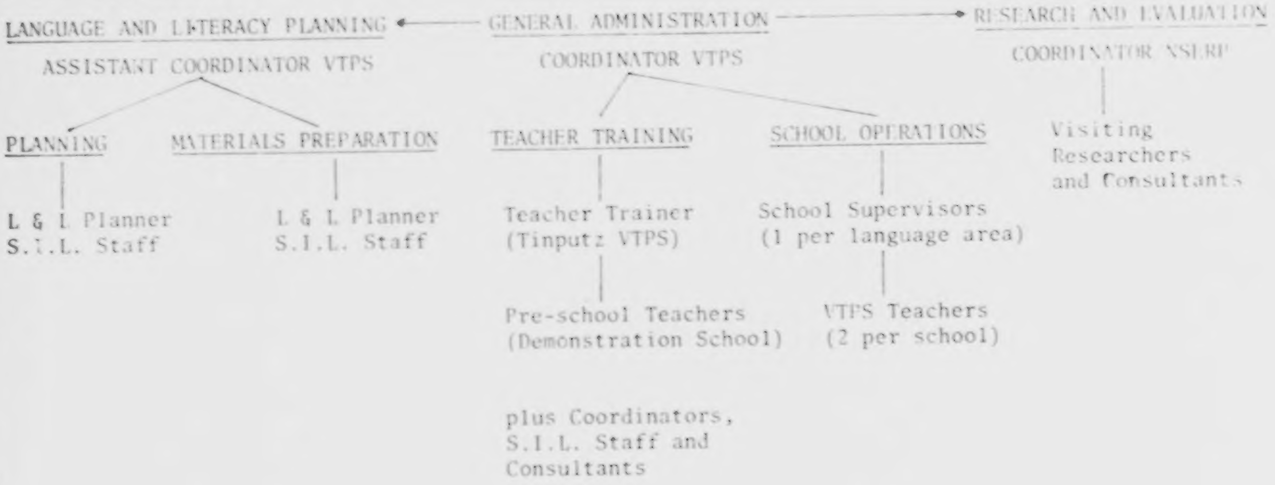
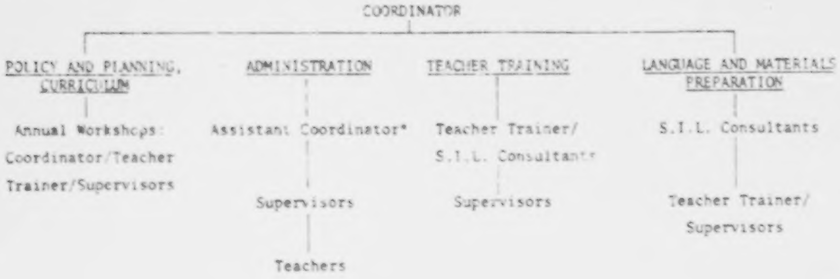

LANGUAGE AND LITERACY PLANNING
GENERAL ADMINISTRATION
RESEARCH AND EVALUATION
ASSISTANT COORDINATOR VTPS
COORDINATOR VTPS
COORDINATOR NSERP
PLANNING
MATERIALS PREPARATION
TEACHER TRAINING
SCHOOL OPERATIONS
Visiting Researchers and Consultants
L & L Planner S.I.L. Staff
L & L Planner S.I.L. Staff
Teacher Trainer (Tinputz VTPS)
School Supervisors (1 per language area)
Pre-school Teachers (Demonstration School)
VTPS Teachers (2 per school)
plus Coordinators, S.I.L. Staff and Consultants

Table 5.2 Proposed new staff structure for VTPS (1983)


COORDINATOR
POLICY AND PLANNING, CURRICULUM
Annual Workshops: Coordinator/Teacher Trainer/Supervisors
ADMINISTRATION
Assistant Coordinator*
Supervisors
Teachers
TEACHER TRAINING
Teacher Trainer/ S.I.L. Consultants
Supervisors
LANGUAGE AND MATERIALS PREPARATION
S.I.L. Consultants
Teacher Trainer/ Supervisors

*The Assistant Coordinator may also be involved in teacher training and language and materials preparation at the discretion of the Coordinator.

With the change of personnel in the Coordinator's and Assistant Coordinator's posts, a rethinking has also taken place concerning these staff roles. We shall look at this development next, as well as at the roles of other key staff within the scheme.

## 5.B. STAFF ROLES

At the beginning of the VTPS Scheme, the roles of the coordinating staff were largely determined by the different capabilities of the first VTPS Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator at the time of their appointment, due to their past education, training and experience. At the time when the Coordinator resigned in 1982 and was replaced by the Assistant Coordinator, it became clear that these roles needed to be reviewed.

Several factors have emerged from past experience which require serious consideration. The first more generally concerns the kind of appointee who is suitable for each of these posts and his or her level of training and experience. It is evident that the responsibilities of the Coordinator's post, proposed below, ideally calls for a graduate with a grasp of issues in language and linguistics, and with considerable confidence and maturity as well as administrative capability. In contrast, it is likely that the best working relationship will be realised if the Assistant Coordinator's post is filled by someone still gaining that kind of experience and training, and willing to work under the direction of his or her more senior colleague. It will also greatly assist the Coordinator if much of the routine clerical work associated with the project can be carried out by her assistant, freeing her for her other responsibilities and travel.

Nevertheless, the experience of the scheme to date indicates that it would be unwise to count on a coordinator filling the post for longer than a three-year period, nor can it be guaranteed that a suitable replacement will always be able to be found from outside the scheme. It is therefore recommended that the Assistant Coordinator's post should be seen as one which is potentially filled by the future Coordinator, while gaining training, confidence and experience. If possible, a graduate with a keen interest in language as well as teacher training should be sought for the position, and carefully prepared for his or her future role.

In spite of what has been written above, a realistic appraisal of the staff actually available at any given time, and the kind of role they are able to play, will always be necessary. Thus, the roles proposed below are not intended to be rigid ones, but rather a division of duties based on current experience, which might be adjusted in a flexible manner in future according to the background and capabilities of those offering for the posts of Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator.

### 5.B.1. Coordinator's Role

It is proposed that for the present, the Coordinator should have overall responsibility for the management of the scheme in all its aspects, as well as the development of policy and planning. She should delegate duties to the Assistant Coordinator and supervise his activities as appropriate. The Coordinator's responsibilities should also involve liaison and collaborative planning with other senior staff of the Education Division, including the Assistant Secretary, the Senior Professional Assistant and the In-service Officer. In addition the continuation of an annual VTPS workshop will enable other staff of the scheme to contribute to the formation of policy from their working experience.

A suggested breakdown of the Coordinator's role and activities, which could form the basis of a revised duty statement is as follows:

1. To be responsible to the Assistant Secretary for Education for the development of policy and planning, and the overall management of the VTPS scheme, in collabora-

tion with other VTPS, divisional and research staff as appropriate.

2. To take overall responsibility for promoting the professional development and training of teachers, and to provide professional advice and support for the Teacher Trainer and supervisors.

3. To liaise with community government chairmen and the Community Government Policy Officer on matters concerning the management of the VTPS scheme, and the selection, morale and discipline of teachers.

4. To take overall responsibility for the long-range planning and execution of work on the languages and dialects of the province, including the preparation and publication of orthographies, dictionaries, and curriculum materials for use in schools.

5. To liaise with S.I.L. staff and other linguists able to contribute to the work of linguistic analysis, the preparation and publication of teaching materials, and the training of teachers in the different languages and dialects of the province.

6. To be responsible for the development and revision of the VTPS curriculum as a whole, including the promotion of a cultural programme and materials.

7. To be responsible for the continuous revision of the timetable for phasing in new VTPS schools, in relation to the preparation of teaching materials and teacher training, availability of classrooms and budgetary considerations.

8. To draw up annually and manage the VTPS budget in collaboration with the Assistant Secretary and the Provincial Administrative Officer.

9. To be responsible for providing information and publicity on the scheme through inservice and other meetings, publications and radio broadcasts to teachers, Boards of Management and the general public.

### 5.B.2. Assistant Coordinator's Role

As previously suggested, the Coordinator should be able to delegate duties related to any of the above activities to the Assistant Coordinator as she sees fit, and keeping in mind the need to provide her deputy with opportunities to gain experience in all aspects of the running of the VTPS scheme. The duties of the Assistant Coordinator should therefore remain flexible, and might be listed as follows:

1. To undertake duties in relation to any aspect of the VTPS scheme as delegated by the Coordinator, including the preservice and inservice training of teachers, liaise with supervisors and Boards of Management, and the preparation and publication of curriculum materials.

2. To take particular responsibility for the day to day organisation and office management of the VTPS scheme, with particular regard to such matters as advance planning on the availability, replacement and training of teachers annually, the collection of teacher's reports, the purchasing and distribution of supplies for schools, and preparation for training courses and workshops including transport and accommodation arrangements.

3. To undertake such training as may be available to further qualify the officer for undertaking his or her assigned duties.

If the above role is accepted as appropriate to the post, the selection of an officer to fill the Assistant Coordinator's position will need to be made bearing in mind its staff development and training aspects. Ideally, it might be filled by a graduate with particular interest and/or experience in the area of language as well as teacher training and administration, with sufficient potential and maturity to hold down a more senior post in the future.

### 5.B.3. Supervisor's Role

Supervisors are responsible for supervising the programme of schools and teachers, and facilitating the distribution of materials and supplies in their language area. Among their most important tasks are school visiting, the organisation of local inservice activities as well as taking a leadership role in the Tinputz training program, assisting in the preparation of teaching materials, teacher's guides and the cultural programme of schools, and liaising with Boards of Management and community governments, especially when matters arise involving the disciplining or replacement of teachers (see Appendix E). Supervisors are the basic link between the VTPS coordinators and teachers in the field.

Because of their role in visiting teachers at work in the classroom, and conducting inservices, supervisors are the main means the VTPS scheme has for improving the performance of teachers and advising them on the curriculum. For cultural reasons, there is some reluctance on the part of supervisors to comment on and criticise the work of teachers where it may need improvement, and to directly demonstrate alternative approaches. Problems have also arisen in organising transport for supervisors to visit schools regularly. Both these problems need careful consideration by the Coordinator. If they can be overcome, the quality of VTPS schools will benefit appreciably.

Nevertheless, the present supervisors have already shown that they are the key to the effective functioning of schools in their area, and their role in the VTPS scheme should be safeguarded. Because they speak the tok ples of teachers and of the curriculum in their area, their intervention with teachers, who are often young and inexperienced, and with school boards is a more indispensible one than that of inspectors in relation to community schools.

It is recommended that every effort should continue to be made by the coordinators to support the work of supervisors, and to involve them in policy-making and the development of the programme for VTPS schools. Particular attention might be paid to their potential role of encouraging the formation of cultural committes in their language area.

### 5.B.4. Teacher Trainer's Role

The Teacher Trainer's role requires the planning and teaching of preservice courses for new teachers, as well as assistance with inservice referesher courses for teachers who have already received their basic training. In addition, the teacher trainer has responsibility for running the demonstration school at the Tinputz Training Centre.

The present Teacher Trainer has mainly tended to concentrate on the general preparation of Year 1 preservice trainees for working with young children and handling a classroom situation, as well as aspects of the VTPS curriculum which do not involve straight literacy teaching, drawing on her experience as a pre-school teacher trainer. The language-teaching side of training courses has been conducted by S.I.L. staff. While there are sound reasons for this division in training functions, it has also meant that the two sides of the training received by new teachers have not always been fully integrated, although language permeates many areas of their learning. As Year 2 of VTPS concentrates more heavily on literacy and less on pre-school activities than year 1, this division has also meant that the Teacher Trainer's contribution has largely been confined to the development of the year 1 curriculum among teachers.

More recently, however, the Teacher Trainer has been involved in preparing Tinputz language primers and readers, and this experience should prove valuable in enabling her to integrate the literacy aspect of teacher training with the other activities in which new teachers are trained, and to work closely with S.I.L. staff during training courses.

As well as managing the preservice training of new teachers, the Teacher Trainer has also been involved in developing a handbook for day to day use by teachers, based on her training programme. It is recommended that the Coordinator work closely with the Teacher Trainer in the preparation, evaluation and revision of the handbook, paying particular attention to the development of the Year 2 currriculum.

The Teacher Trainer should be able to make a substantial contribution to the development of teachers' competency through inservice and refresher courses, working together with the supervisors by making visits to schools to supervise teachers in the classroom. This role has not been satisfactorily carried out so far because of a lack of adequate planning and budgeting at headquarters level. It is a serious waste of the Trainer's considerable experience and talents for her to be confined to the Tinputz Training Centre for most of the year, outside the times of training courses and out of contact with teachers, although she has used these periods to develop a teacher's handbook and Tinputz language materials, as well as running the Demonstration School. The difficulty she has experienced in carrying out her inservice/visiting role has been a weakness in the management of the programme.

As the Demonstration School will now be turning into a properly staffed VTPS school, as a result of the preparation of Tinputz primers and readers, it is recommended that the Trainer be used to full advantage to participate in inservice activities and the visiting of schools. Given the proximity of Tinputz to the Buka area, and the particular need which has been identified to assist Buka area teachers at the present time, this should be a logical focus for her in 1985, with the Coordinator giving more attention to Buin and Kieta area schools as necessary.

The Teacher Trainer has benefitted from a Pacific tour early in 1983, organised by the Ofis B'long ol Meri in Fiji, during which she was able to visit training institutions in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji, and participate in training courses. Previously, she was invited to take part in a training course at S.I.L. headquarters in Ukarumpa. Opportunities of this kind are of great value and should be sought out wherever possible. At the same time, it is important that the trainer's experience is not underestimated, and that efforts are made to fully utilise her potential contribution to the overall VTPS programme.

### 5.B.5. The Role of the S.I.L.

Since the earliest planning stages of the VTPS scheme, the Summer Institute of Linguistics has provided invaluable assistance to the provincial government in establishing and maintaining the scheme. The S.I.L. role has always been that of consultants, but their activities have been varied in relation to the implementation of the scheme, and the scope of these activities will be outlined below.

During 1983, the S.I.L. opened its new North Solomons Indigenous Language and Music Centre in Kieta, offering a permanent base for the organisation and its staff in the North Solomons, and thus providing some guarantee of a long-term commitment to the study and development of the indigenous languages of the province. For this reason, it is timely to review the relationship of S.I.L. with the VTPS scheme.

Until mid-1983, the S.I.L. and the North Solomons Education Research Project together with Ms Audrey Aarons, a consultant from the UPNG Education Faculty, provided the only real input of professional advice on the language and literacy aspects of the VTPS scheme, as well as the pedagogical approach taken, and the S.I.L. shouldered the task of producing the teaching materials which are used in schools. Since then, however, several important developments have taken place.

The first of these developments is the return of the VTPS Coordinator from post-graduate studies in education and language at the University of Hawaii. The experience which she has gained will enable her to formally take charge of the language and materials preparation of the scheme, and to liaise with the S.I.L. on the future planning of such aspects as the entry into new languages and placement of linguists, materials preparation workshops and the training programme for teachers.

The second development is largely a consequence of the establishment of the S.I.L.'s new centre in Kieta, which has already enabled a successful primer workshop to be held drawing in local materials writers from the Haku and Usai language areas, as well as involving the VTPS Coordinator and Teacher Trainer working on Teop and Tinputz materials respectively. The Centre will enable such workshops to be held from time to time on a regular basis, bringing together provincial government and S.I.L. staff with material writers drawn from the different language areas, and thus facilitating the production of materials from the writing stage through to typing and duplication. The provision by the S.I.L. of a staff member, Mrs Gaye Brown, skilled and experienced in the pedagogy of teaching younger children, has further strengthened this process.

The S.I.L. have also previously taken a heavy load of responsibility in helping to organise the programme of new schools starting up, and supporting their teachers as they gain confidence. the dedicated contribution made by S.I.L. staff, with a long involvement in the Halia, Nasioi and Telei languages, to the successful establishment of schools in their respective areas should not go without due acknowledgement. While it is hoped this support will continue, the experience being gained by the VTPS staff, especially the supervisors, should ease much of their load in the future.

Probably the most vital future contribution needing to be made by the S.I.L. will be in the area of analysing languages in the province which have so far been insufficiently studied, and preparing orthographies, grammars and dictionaries of these languages from which teaching materials for children can be derived. The S.I.L. has received encouragement from the provincial government in undertaking this task, and has responded postively.

One further area of assistance by the S.I.L. needs to be mentioned here. Following a successful workshop on 'Communication through Music', organised jointly by the S.I.L. and the North Solomons University Centre in June 1983, and led by Dr Vida Chenoweth, an ethnomusicologist who has worked for the S.I.L. in the Eastern Highlands and prepared indigenous music books for Eastern Highlands community schools, the S.I.L. has undertaken to prepare similar music books for the VTPS scheme. These will enable children to learn to read and write music or make musical instruments, indigenous to their area. This development may be one of particular significance, not only because it is a way of transmitting the North Solomons' rich musical heritage to children, but because it offers a concrete and practical means to teach cultural studies, an area which has so far not been tackled in a satisfactory manner.

The multiple roles being carried out by the S.I.L., within the scope of their broad role as consultants, can therefore be summarised as follows:

1. To undertake the study and analysis of new languages in the province, and to prepare orthographies, grammars and dictionaries for them.

2. To assist in the production of VTPS teaching materials such as pre-primers and primers, and pre-reading and reading books, by such means as writers' workshops.

3. To prepare books which will enable children to read and write music and make musical instruments indigenous to their areas.

4. To provide teachers with preservice and inservice training in language and literacy methods.

5. To visit schools with their supervisors from time to time, and to provide advice on matters of classroom teaching and teaching performance.

6. To act generally as consultants to the VTPS Coordinator on any language and literacy matters on which she may wish to seek advice.

A final topic of relevance concerns the future use of the new S.I.L. Indigenous Language and Music Centre for VTPS training purposes. This is a sensitive area of which all parties are aware, and which needs much careful thought.

There are several drawbacks with Tinputz as a site for training. One problem is the lack of suitable housing for visitng S.I.L. staff, especially if they have children. Another problem is that the area is infested with mosquitoes, and during all training courses students have contracted malaria. As against this, the Centre has its own identity as a provincial government training centre, and is a much more convenient place for the Teacher Trainer, being where her home is and where she has the active support of her husband during training courses. Suggestions have already been put forward by the Teacher Trainer for building a low-cost local materials house on the site for S.I.L.

staff, and it should not be beyond the ingenuity of VTPS staff to plan anti-malarial precautions for trainees.

Nevertheless, there are attractive features of the S.I.L. Centre for training purposes. It has adequate accomodation for staff, and potentially adequate accomodation for students if part of the malaria services building adjoining the S.I.L. complex and the Cultural Centre could be utilised, by agreement with the Health Division. It is in a central point within the province, is virtually malaria-free, and would be accessible for the Coordinator and Assistant Coordinator throughout training courses. It would also be more convenient in terms of obtaining food supplies and materials.

Future arrangements will therefore need to be the subject of careful deliberation, involving both VTPS and S.I.L. staff, so that an agreement is reached which is acceptable to both sides. The possibility of a compromise situation being reached should not be ruled out, such as Year 1 pre-training, which makes the heaviest demand on the Teacher Trainer, being carried out at Tinputz, with Year 2 training, mainly involving literacy, being undertaken at Kieta. In any case, planning for future S.I.L. accommodation at Tinputz will need to be given high priority in the near future if the centre is to be further utilised.

## 5.C. THE ROLE OF COMMUNITY GOVERNMENTS

One of the most difficult areas to clarify in establishing the VTPS programme has been that of defining the role of community governments in relation to the scheme.

It was intended from the start that VTPS should as far as possible be a local community-based scheme, under the agency of community governments. The problem is that the term 'agency' can be defined in different ways. For example, the role of the churches in a 'church agency' school is an important but still relatively minor one, in comparison with the control exercised by the national and provincial governments over the curriculum, teacher appointment and payment, and the budget. This does not necessarily provide a suitable model for VTPS.

At present there is no doubt that all major administrative decisions lie in the hands of the Coordinator, in turn responsible to the Assistant Secretary for Education and the P.E.B. budget matters are entirely determined through provincial budgeting processes. However, planning of general policy and administration and curriculum is primarily taking place through workshops involving the coordinators, supervisors and Teacher Trainer. this is an effective and democratic way of making decisions, involving as it does both central and field staff.

What role, then, is left for community governments? Their main influence is in regard to the selection and payment of teachers, and assisting school Boards of Management in the provision of buildings, as well as having general responsibilities for the oversight and encouragement of schools in their area. However, a vexed issue has become that of payment of teachers.

When the VTPS scheme started in 1980, teachers were paid individually by cheque posted from the provincial accounts office. This system did not work well, and teachers often waited months before being paid. At the same time, community government chairmen made a strong request to the Coordinator for them to take charge of payment of teachers. This request was granted, and initially community governments received a monthly cheque from provincial accounts from which they could themselves pay teachers. Shortly after, a further concession was made and community governments received quarterly cheques instead. In 1982/83, however, the use of these funds for other purposes in a few cases led to the non-payment of teachers, and resulted in this concession being withdrawn and payment through district offices being substituted.

What needs to be emphasised perhaps is first, that the situation remains an experimental rather than a fixed or permanent one, and second, that community governments are likely to become frustrated and may possibly lose interest in tok ples skuls if they are not given some real sense of responsibility in administering them. There is tension between this need to give a meaningful role to community government in the management of VTPS, and the need to safeguard teachers and ensure they are paid regularly. The situation is a fluid one, and it is not easy to see what should be done to resolve the dilemma. It should be kept constantly under review, and ways to return payment to community governments while ensuring financial accountability should be sought.

## 5.D. ADMINISTRATIVE PROBLEMS AND PERFORMANCE

Since the first VTPS schools opened in 1980, considerable progress has been made in developing an effective system of administration for the scheme. Credit for this must go to the first VTPS Coordinator, Mr Levi Golu, and to the former

Assistant Secretary for Education, Mr Stephen Lapan, who gave the scheme consistent backing, as well as to the present Coordinator and Assistant Secretary.

While the present VTPS administrative organisation within the Education Division can therefore be considered basically sound, it is inevitable that there are some areas of weakness which have shown up in the administration of the scheme during its first three years of operation. It is obvious that the staff of a scheme such as this will always have their individual strengths as well as weaknesses, often depending on how their prior training and experience have prepared them for the different aspects of their work. Some of the problems which have arisen may be attributed simply to the performance of individuals. However, there are undoubtedly some general points which it will be useful to make, where improvements could make a real contribution to the quality of the scheme. These will be looked at under the headings of planning and general administration, contact with field staff, and materials production and delivery.

## 5.D.1. Planning and General Administration

One of the most evident weaknesses in the past operation of the VTPS scheme has been a lack of systematic forward planning. This has particularly affected training courses, which require a great deal of advance preparation. The planner of a training course must think of training staff, transport, food supplies and accommodation for the trainees, and getting advance information to them about their travel arrangements and what they have to bring with them to the course; the provision of teaching aids and materials for the teacher trainers; and the planning of the course itself, what topics will be covered and who will teach them. This is a major task of organisation, and while there is no doubt that previous courses have for the most part been very successful, some unneccesary problems and hardships have occured because of the last-minute planning and organisation of some aspects of them. Without the back-up of Mr. and Mrs. Kaetavara at Tinputz and of S.I.L. staff, there have been occasions when training course organisation might have come close to breaking down.

Planning for training courses needs to start months in advance. It is strongly recommended that the VTPS Coordinator be supplied with a good sized blackboard (or whiteboard) where advance planning details can be laid out and reviewed. The present office accommodation for senior staff is not really adequate for the scope of the operation which they have to coordinate, and the scheme could benefit from a physical working environment which encourages the kind of planning activities which are required.

Other aspects of general administration which have sometimes suffered from lack of planning are, advance research on the numbers of children likely to be enrolled in successive years; the question of teacher replacements and the training of new teachers each year; the following up of monthly teachers' reports with appropriate action; the planning of regular small-scale VTPS inservices between schools in community government areas (something which has been frequently talked about but never actioned); and the organisation of transport for supervisors to visit schools. Other areas of weakness have been the once-only writing of a newsletter for teachers, and the supply of regular information and encouragement to teachers through radio broadcasts. These are important aspects of keeping in contact with teachers and staff in the field.

### 5.D.2. Contact with Field Staff

Together with advance planning, regular contact between the coordinators and field staff of the scheme has been perhaps the scheme's most serious administrative weakness.

A system such as VTPS which is decentralised and community-based and which draws on a good deal of voluntary support, relies heavily on good communications to make it function effectively. More than this, the kind of personal care and interest which is shown towards the work of field staff make all the difference to their working morale. There have been occasions in the past when S.I.L. staff have worked back-breaking hours to prepare materials locally and to help establish schools, and where supervisors were meeting severe problems, when promises of visits from headquarters were continually put off, or never took place without adequate reasons being given. Sometimes teachers have gone for long periods without pay, without sufficient action being taken. At other times the Teacher Trainer has been left almost without contact with headquarters during the many months between training courses. These have largely been 'teething troubles' of the early days of the scheme, which have been rectified, but it is worth emphasizing the continuing importance of good communication.

Similarly, arrangements for the visiting of teachers by the supervisors and Teacher Trainer is a vital part of maintaining an adequate quality of teaching in schools. The difficulties met so far in organising and funding the means of transport for them to carry out this work might be considered the single most serious weakness in the VTPS scheme at present. There would appear to be an important role for community governments to play in this area.

Constant consideration and encouragement of field staff including teachers, should therefore be given high priority in the running of the scheme, using all the means possible for communication: correspondence, telephone, radio broadcast, newsletters, personal visits and inservices as appropriate.

Some of the areas of planning and administration mentioned above have already been showing steady signs of improvement. This section is therefore mainly intended to highlight what may be seen as critical areas in the nurturing of a new scheme, but also perhaps for the healthy maintenance of any education system. The frequent praise of the morale and vitality of VTPS teachers which has been given by observers is still the best indicator of the health of the scheme.

One of the most positive recent developments has been the institution of an annual VTPS policy and planning workshop. The first workshop was organised by the previous Coordinator in 1982 (see Appendix B), and was attended by the Teacher Trainer, supervisors and research and evaluation staff. It proved an excellent means of drawing on the field experience of staff and involving them in decision-making on the scheme. The continuation of this innovation should be of great future value to VTPS.

### 5.D.3. Materials Production and Delivery

The logistics of preparing, printing and distributing large numbers of teaching books has been one of the most demanding tasks of VTPS staff. The scheme has been, and continues to be extremely fortunate in having the services of S.I.L. staff in the preparation of books to the stage of printing or duplication, and it is now in an even stronger position with the involvement of the Coordinator and Teacher Trainer as well as supervisors in the development of materials.

Most of the problems which have occured in the past have revolved around three things: finding a primer typewriter to type materials, getting photo-ready copy to the printers, and collecting and distributing books to schools when prepared.

The question of a primer typewriter is likely to be solved in the near future through the services of the new S.I.L. Centre in Kieta. The problem of getting photo-ready copy to the printers has been superseded by the larger question of where books can be printed, and of printing costs. Up until mid-1982 all materials were printed free of charge by B.C.L. as a service to the provincial government. With the taking over of the B.C.L. printshop by B.D.C., any printing arrangements will need to be negotiated either with B.D.C. or possibly with the S.I.L. printery in Ukarumpa. If these negotiations are not successful, then it may be necessary for materials to be duplicated at the S.I.L. Centre, and appropriate administrative arrangements and costing will need to be worked out between the Coordinator and S.I.L.

The issue of delivering books to schools is part of a larger question of the distribution of all VTPS school supplies. At present this is done through the Education Division's material supplies section, but it has been proving unsatisfactory. It is recommended that the problem of the distribution of books and materials be taken up at the next policy and planning workshop, and between the VTPS Coordinator and the Assistant Secretary so that a more satisfactory supply system can be worked out.

## 5.E. SUMMARY

The recommendations of the evaluation concerning the administration of the VTPS scheme can be summarised as follows:

### 5.E.1. Administrative Structure and Role of Coordinators

A revised administrative structure is proposed which gives the **Coordinator** overall responsibility for the four main areas of VTPS operatons: administration, policy and planning, teacher training and language and materials preparation, in liaison with senior staff of the education division. The **Assistant Coordinator** would concentrate primarily on administrative matters, while undertaking duties in other areas of VTPS management as delegated by the Coordinator, bearing in mind the staff development and training aspect of the Assistant's role as a potential future successor to the Coordinator.

### 5.E.2. Role of Supervisors

The role of supervisors is to provide the basic link between the VTPS coordinators and teachers in the field, and to supervise and facilitate the programme of schools and teachers. It is recommended that the coordinators make every effort to support the work of supervisors, and to involve them in policy-making and programme development, including the formation of cultural committees in their language area.

### 5.E.3. Teacher Trainer's Role

It is recommended that particular attention be paid to the Teacher Trainer's role in developing teachers' competency through inservice and refresher courses and school visits, as well as basic preservice training, so that her potential contribution to the programme is fully utilised. It is also recommended that the Coordinator work closely with the trainer in the preparation, evaluation and revision of a teacher's handbook, paying special attention to the development of the year 1 curriculum.

### 5.E.4. The Role of S.I.L.

The role of S.I.L. staff is defined as that of consultants to the VTPS scheme, working in liaison with the Coordinator. Among the scope of their activities, the analysis of insufficiently studied languages in the province and the preparation of orthographies, grammars and dictionaries for them is singled out as a particularly vital future contribution. Another important development would be the preparation of books to teach children literacy in their indigenous musical forms. It is recommended that careful thought be given to the Tinputz Training Centre and the new S.I.L. Centre in Kieta as alternative sites for training courses and workshops, and to the provision of suitable housing for S.I.L. staff at Tinputz.

### 5.E.5. The Role of Community Governments

Community governments provide the agency for Viles Tok Ples Skuls. However, their role is still not firmly defined. Their main functions to date have been to select and pay teachers, assist in the general oversight and encouragement of schools, and to help school boards of management in the provision of buildings. However, financial mismanagement in a few cases has led to the withdrawal of the right to pay teachers. It is noted that the VTPS scheme is intended to be a genuinely community-based one, and that this is not possible unless community governments have real participation in the scheme. It is recommended that the issue of payment of teachers and the role of community governments be further reviewed.

5.E.6. Administrative Problems and Performance

It is recommended that high priority be given to the following aspects of administration:

1. **Advance planning** of operations with particular reference to training courses, and that a working environment conducive to efficient planning should be provided for the coordinators within the Education Division.
2. **Communication with field staff**, using all available means including correspondence, telephone, radio broadcasts, personal visits and inservices as appropriate.
3. **Continuation of an annual policy and planning workshop**, involving coordinators, the Teacher Trainer, supervisors and research staff.
4. **Materials production and delivery**, which should be reviewed by the Coordinator together with S.I.L. staff and the Assistant Secretary of Education.

## Chapter 6

## FUTURE PLANNING AND EXPANSION OF VILES TOK PLES SKULS

Much of this report is taken up with asking and answering the fundamental questions of any evaluation. What are the basic goals of VTPS? How valuable is attainment of these goals to the people of the province, in their estimate and from the point of view of professional educators? Is the VTPS system which has been set up a viable one to achieve these goals? What are the strengths and weaknesses of its performance to date?

The fieldwork for this evaluation was undertaken throughout 1982, and has therefore covered only the third year in which VTPS has been in operation. During this time about 30% of children of VTPS age in the province were actually being educated in these schools. In order for the remaining 70% of children in this age range (7-8 years old) to be enrolled in VTPS, long range projections well into the coming century are required, as well as an analysis of alternative means of expanding, organising and financing the system. It is on this longer term planning that the future viability of the scheme must depend.

### 6.A. EXPANSION OF THE VTPS SCHEME

This evaluation starts with the assumption that if the VTPS scheme is to continue, then it must expand so as to eventually give all children in the province access to tok ples education. The demand which has already been experienced by personnel involved with the scheme, from people in areas which do not yet have VTPS to extend schools to their communities, is one indication that it would be unacceptable to simply halt expansion and confine VTPS to areas where it already exists. This demand has been expressed to supervisors and coordinators of the scheme from time to time in the form of anger that some areas are being favoured over others. One community leader in Solos, for example, remarked, "I suppose these schools are going to be for coastal people". A sense of social justice, therefore, tends to dictate that VTPS should be made available to all communities if it is to exist at all. The above argument also applies with regard to any educational benefits of VTPS. If, as suggested in this evaluation, two years of tok ples schooling may give children a headstart in their education, then it is clearly unfair to extend this advantage to children in some parts of the province and not to others.

What criteria should we use, then, for expanding VTPS? Decisions are needed as to how long it should take to introduce VTPS schools throughout the province, that is, the **time scale** for completion of the scheme and as to how soon particular languages and dialects should be introduced and in what order, that is, **language priorities** in expanding the scheme. We shall look first at the question of overall timing in the expansion of VTPS.

### 6.A.1. Criteria for Expansion: The Time Scale

There are three main considerations which have to be balanced in establishing a time scale for expanding the scheme. These are public pressure, which involves questions of political sensitivity; technical readiness, that is, when curriculum materials are able to be prepared and printed in different languages and dialects; and the budget capacity to pay for teachers and materials over periods of time.

As previously noted, those who have had involvement with VTPS in field situations (including Education, S.I.L., and research staff) have all reported demands and requests as to when the scheme will be extended into other language areas, and questions as to why certain areas have been neglected. At the same time, the S.I.L. experience of preparing language materials for schools has given a reasonable idea of the pace at which new materials can be prepared. And the current budget situation points to the need for as much restraint as possible in the financial demands which expansion of the system places on the provincial budget.

A relatively simple formula is therefore proposed, which takes account of all of these factors. It is suggested that a period of 40 years is allowed to phase in schools throughout the province, starting with the 1983-87 five year plan. As VTPS started in 1980, this allows in fact a 43 year period in total for completion of the scheme.

The logic of this proposal is that parents need to be able to envisage their area receiving attention within their foreseeable lifetime. To extend beyond the year 2022, which would be the end of a 40 year plan, would in effect be telling people in a number of communities that they will not see tok ples schools in their lifetime. Where communities are likely, even with such a plan, to have to accept the frustrations of waiting perhaps twenty or thirty years to see VTPS developing, it is proposed that linguistic studies of their language be started some time in advance to indicate that attention is nevertheless being paid to their area.

It will be seen from Tables 6.1 and 6.2 that a 40 year plan would require 3 to 5 new schools a year, with 4 new schools a year providing a rough average. The exact number of new teachers' salaries this would necessitate would vary according to the proportion of schools which were annual or bi-annual, but an average requirement of 5 to 6 new salaries could be anticipated. Means will be suggested later in this section for covering half the cost of these salaries from savings within the present system. This would leave approximately 3 new salaries a year to be met out of provincial government funding at a current cost of K3120. If the salary of one new language area Supervisor is added each 5 years, this would bring the average annual increase to about K3520. This is equivalent to funding one new community school base-level teacher's salary per annum. In relation to the projected increase in community school teachers in the Education Five Year Plan, and the Development Strategy, this proportional increase seems reasonable and acceptable for VTPS.

A period of 40 years to phase in new schools would enable materials to be prepared and printed in something like three languages and their dialects during each five year plan, with schools in these languages to be introduced during the subsequent five years. This would be the maximum pace at which materials preparation could be expected to proceed, and is likely to prove the greatest constraint in meeting the target of introducing schools to all areas by 2022. Compared to the time-consuming demands of analysing languages, preparing children's books in them and typing, laying-out and printing these books, the task of training teachers and establishing schools is a relatively quick and straight forward one.

The proposed plan for phasing in tok ples schools in all language areas within 40 years, therefore, seems justifiable on the grounds of meeting public demand for the expansion of VTPS within an acceptable period of time, working with an adequate time scale for new language materials to be prepared, and restraining the pressure of increased costs on the provincial budget to the equivalent of one new community school teacher's salary a year.*

A further justification for this pace of development is that it will allow a sound use of the capacity of the Tinputz Training Centre and the teacher trainer. It should allow for an annual training course for the 5 or 6 new teachers together with replacement teachers from areas where schools already exist; a second course for teachers preparing to teach year 2; and a third inservice refresher course for teachers already in the system.

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*It should be noted that these figures are averaged out over the 5 years of each Five Year Plan. Considerable flexibility will be held in planning the development of schools in any one given year.

### 6.A.2. Criteria for Expansion: Language Priorities

With regard to language priorities in the expansion of VTPS, once again at least three factors need to be considered. These are: the availability of linguists to work in a particular language and its dialects; public demand for tok ples schools in particular areas; and even-handedness in starting schools in different parts of the province.

All of these considerations were important in the decisions made to establish the first Viles Tok Ples Skuls. The three language areas of Halia (Buka), Telei (Buin) and Nasioi (Kieta) corresponded to areas where there were long-serving S.I.L. linguists whose work in developing their respective languages was well advanced, enabling teaching materials to be readily prepared. The Telei and Halia areas in particular were places where pressure had already built up for tok ples education and they represented the three main divisions of the province into North, Central and South. In addition, these three language groups were amongst the largest in the province, allowing the work done in preparing materials to be used to advantage with a relatively large number of children.

A judicious balance of the same factors is involved in the planning proposed in Table 6.1. Advantage is still being taken of areas where linguists have already been at work, notably the Teop-Tinputz-Rotokas area, the Mortlocks, and Nagovis. Public interest has also been strong in these areas as well as in the Selau and Solos areas of Buka, and the West Coast. It is this latter area, the West Coast, that has perhaps most cause to feel neglected, and the Kunua and Banoni languages have been included as early on as seems feasible in the plan.

Both the proposed time scale and the priorities for entering new language areas and introducing new schools are shown in Tables 6.1 and 6.3 which look at the immediate period 1983-87. As each tok ples school is intended to be a small brother/sister to a community school, account has been taken of the proposed minimum increase of two new community schools per annum in calculating the overall increase in VTPS up until 2022. This gives a final total of 205 VTPS by this year, of which 172 would be new schools. It should be noted that without the proposed increase in VTPS simply to keep pace with the growth of community schools, the projected number of new tok ples schools would be reduced to about 100 rather than 172, similarly reducing final costs by more than 40%. Thus, the long term planning and costing of VTPS is closely related to population increase and decisions as to the rate of expansion of community schooling.

Table 6.1 Proposed long-term planning for language/materials development and opening of new schools.

| 5 Yr. Plans | New Schools x Lang. Areas | Estimate Number N=205 | Language Analysis/ Materials Development x Areas |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1983 - 87 | Haku | 4 | Teop/Tinputz/Rotokas |
| | Nasioi | 9 | Nagovisi |
| | Tinputz (Training Centre) | 1 | |
| | Teop (Trial School) | 1 | |
| | Rotokas | 1 | |
| | | (16) | |
| 1988 - 92 | Nasioi | 5 | Kunua |
| | Teop/Tinputz/Rotokas | 15 | Mortlock |
| | | (20) | Siwai |
| 1993 - 97 | Nagovisi | 10 | Solos |
| | | | Selau |
| | Siwai | 12 | Banoni |
| | | (22) | |
| 1998 - 2002 | Solos | 8 | Nissan |
| | | | Torokina |
| | Selau | 3 | Usai |
| | Banoni | 4 | |
| | Kunua | 2 | |
| | Mortlocks | 3 | |
| | | (20) | |
| 2003 - 2022 | Remaining Schools/Language | (9 approx.) | |

Table 6.2 Proposed expansion of VTPS over the period 1980-2022

| 5 Year Plans | No. of new schools | % increase in schools per annum | Growth in total no. of schools |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1980 - 82+ | 33 | 10.3 | 33 |
| 1983 - 87 | 17 | 3.4 | 50 |
| 1988 - 92 | 20 | 4.0 | 70 |
| 1993 - 97 | 22 | 4.4 | 92 |
| 1998 - 2002 | 20 | 4.0 | 112 |
| 2003 - 2022* | 93 | 4.65 | 205 |

+ This represents the 3 establishment years of VTPS.
* This covers the period of 4 five year plans.

Table 6.3 Proposed expansion of schools by language area 1983-87

| Year | School | Annual/ Biennial | Number of teachers required | Language | Area |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1984 | Bairima | A | 2 | Nasioi (Central) | Kieta |
| | Keuru | A | 2 | Nasioi (Central) | Kieta |
| | Marai | A | 2 | Nasioi (Central | Kieta |
| | Lontis | A | 2 | Haku | Buka |
| | Lemankoa | A | 2 (10) | Haku | Buka |
| 1985 | Dunara | B | 1 | Nasioi (Kongara) | Kieta |
| | Kakusida | B | 1 | Nasioi (Kongara) | Kieta |
| | Roreinang | B | 1 | Nasioi (Kongara) | Kieta |
| | Eltupan | A | 2 | Haku | Buka |
| | Centre | A | +1 (6) | Tinputz | Tinputz |
| 1986 | Dongeta | B | 1 | Nasioi (Kongara) | Kieta |
| | Tanamalo | B | 1 | Haku | Buka |
| | Kekesu | B | 1 | Teop | Teop-Tinputz |
| | Ruruvu | B | 1 (4) | Rotokas | Rotokas |
| 1987 | Koromira | A | 2 | Nasioi (Koromira) | Kieta |
| | Koianu | B | 1 (3) | Nasioi (Koromira) | Kieta |

The following section studies various options for financing VTPS in view of the expansion of the system which has been proposed.

## 6.B. OPTIONS FOR FINANCING VTPS IN RELATION TO ITS EXPANSION

By far the greatest costs in running VTPS accrue from the salaries of teachers and supervisors, amounting to more than 80% of the budget annually. It is in this area, therefore, that we must look first of all in determining any new strategies for financing the scheme or for minimising the burden of expenditure.

There are two aspects of this issue to consider. The first is the level of payment for teachers and supervisors. The second is the broader question of how VTPS is organised and the utilisation of staff.

### 6.B.1. Level of Payment for Teachers and Supervisors

We shall initially examine the salary level for teachers and the original rationale behind it, and then the salaries paid to supervisors.

a. Teachers' Salaries

VTPS teachers are paid K40 per fortnight, amounting to K1040 gross per annum. This figure was determined by the North Solomons Education Research Project in 1979, on the basis of a prior research project which examined the Education Department's scheme known as Community Secondary Education (CSE). This scheme for establishing community learning centres for school leavers largely utilised teachers and supervisors drawn from the same sources as originally planned for VTPS - former community school teachers and high school leavers living at home in rural communities (CSE also drew heavily on mission staff). Research into the success or failure of CSE projects and the approximate salary levels which appeared adequate to retain teaching and supervisory staff led to the determination of the VTPS salary levels.

When VTPS was being set up, there was by no means all round agreement as to what constituted a 'high' or 'low' salary for a rural-based teacher teaching for half a day (but often spending further time in preparation for the next day's work), and receiving about 3 months training in all. Nevertheless, a consensus was reached after considerable discussion that K40 a fortnight was a very reasonable sum, taking into account, for example, an aid post orderly's salary. Given the prevailing economy of the North Solomons, the figure corresponded well with the CSE research findings of a salary level which was likely to attract and hold prospective teachers and create a stable system. It was considered best if anything to start on the 'high' side so as to make the job an attractive one from its inception, and so as to avoid wastage, discontent and pressure for salary increases from the early days of the scheme.

This reckoning appears to have paid off with VTPS. Although a settling down period was needed in the Buin area, the system has been remarkably stable over the past two years, and has had considerable success in attracting suitable teachers from within rural communities, and suitable replacements for less adequate teachers. Teacher wastage and discontent have been minimal in spite of frequent hardships, including non-payment of salaries and lack of supervision, books and supplies from time to time. Moreover, so far there has not been any great pressure for salary increases, and it is likely that salaries can be held at their present level for some time to come.

Such pressure as has been brought to bear for a small increase has come from former community school teachers in Buka, who would like to see the VTPS system brought in line with national education system conditions. The scheme's initiators, however, adopted the approach that VTPS should be a village or community-based system, drawing on teachers with the security of living in their home environment, and should take account of the limited financial resources available to the provincial government. Therefore, it is suggested that pressures to create a public-service-like organisation should be resisted, and the notion of developing an appropriate locally-adapted system be fostered. A suitable approach might be to review salary levels at the time of drawing up each subsequent five year plan, in the light of current and projected living conditions and incomes in rural communities.

At present, it appears the soundest policy is to maintain salaries at their present level. There does not seem to be justification at the time of writing for them to be either lowered or raised without on the one hand affecting teacher's morale, or on the other laying further burdens on the provincial budget in a time of recession.

### b. Supervisors' Salaries

As with teachers' salaries, so supervisors' salaries (K68 per fortnight, K1768 per annum) seem to have been initially well judged. However, with the development of schools throughout the Buin area, certain difficulties in the conception of where the supervisor lived and the scope of his responsibilities became evident, as explained below.

The role of supervisors is proving a critical one in the operation of VTPS. It is a far more central role than that of school inspectors for community or high schools, because of the fact that all VTPS education is conducted in tok ples, which is not, for the most part the, language of the VTPS coordinators. Therefore, the professional development and oversight of teachers, and a grasp of what is actually going on in schools is dependent on visits by the supervisors. Moreover in the case of areas such as Buin, with widespread schools difficult to reach because of road conditions, it is simply not feasible for them to be reached other than very occasionally by the coordinators. As schools develop throughout the province, the chances for provincial office staff to reach them individually will be less and less frequent. As local community problems involving teachers arise, as is inevitable, the supervisors are key personnel to liaise between teachers, Boards of Management, community governments and Education office staff. Without them, the links between the Education office and teachers in the field are in danger of becoming very tenuous.

Without the supervisors there is no on-site supervision of VTPS teachers, who have minimal training and much need of support. Community school teachers by comparison, have the daily assistance of their headteachers, but they are not generally able to assist VTPS teachers because they often do not speak the tok ples of the area.

In Buin, because of a number of factors including difficult terrain, a young and initially inexperienced teaching force, and social disturbance in some communities, the scheme has been dependent on the supervisor working with the S.I.L. representative to establish itself and survive. An excellent supervisor, a former community school headmaster was found, but it became evident that in order for him to move around the district it was essential for him to be based in Buin Town, and not in his remote home village (Siuru), even though it was originally envisaged that supervisors would be based at home, and their salary was calculated with this in mind. Given the demands of distance, the bad roads to be covered and the number of schools to be served in Buin district, added to the expense of having to pay rent and services for a town house and town food and bills, a higher salary of K100 per fortnight was negotiated for the Buin supervisor and included in the 1983 budget. It became clear that the system would not be able to hold a supervisor of the necessary calibre, living in Buin Town, for less than this.

At the 1982 VTPS staff workshop, it was recommended that the two levels of salaries for supervisors should be institutionalised as policy. Supervisors living in town and/or with an especially large area and number of schools to supervise should be paid the higher salary of K100 per fortnight. Those living at home and with a limited area to cover should receive the original salary of K68 per fortnight. The reasoning behind this recommendation appears practical and sound.

From a financial stand point, however, one change in the original planning of VTPS is necessary. It was thought that every main language area should have a supervisor (somewhere between 12 and 20 ideally would be the case). However, the cost of such an approach now appears quite prohibitive especially if higher salaries are to be paid to supervisors. This evaluation proposes that there should be a maximum of 7 supervisors, with their level of payment tentatively adjusted as shown in Table 6.4.

Table 6.4 Payment of VTPS supervisors by area

| Language area | Supervisor's payment |
|---|---|
| East Buka (and Carterets) | K2,600 |
| West Buka | 1,768 |
| Nasioi area | 2,600 |
| Buin area | 2,600 |
| Teop/Tinputz/Rotokas | 2,600 |
| Nagovisi | 1,768 |
| Siwai | 1,768 |
| TOTAL | K15,704 |

This proposed breakdown of supervisors and payments needs further discussion and revision and is mainly to provide a rough estimate of likely costs in a fully-implemented scheme. Averaged over the full period of the plan, the increase would be in the order of K392 per annum. The original conception of paying a minimum number of 12 supervisors at K1,768 (with Buin at a higher level) would have amounted to at least K22,048. The saving effected in the revised plan is therefore in the order of K6,344. If it finally proved acceptable to areas other than Buin to pay supervisors at the old rate of K1,768, then the proposed total would be reduced to K13,208, saving a further one and a half thousand kina. Whether this lower amount would attract suitable staff given the demands of the job would need careful investigation, however.

It can be seen that in general it is not a recommendation of the evaluation to tamper in any drastic way with the payment of teachers and supervisors, and it is not an area in which major savings are like to be made. We shall look next, then, at alternative ways of organising VTPS and utilising teachers to see what economies can be effected in this way.

### 6.B.2. Alternative Ways of Organising VTPS and Utilising Teachers to Reduce Budget Costs

At the VTPS staff workshop in 1982, three options were considered for making savings on teachers' salaries while VTPS expanded. These options, and the resolutions passed were as follows:

a. Reduction of Teachers in Biennial Schools

VTPS policy to date has been for all schools to have two teachers. Where schools are annual intake schools, these teachers each have a class to themselves, either Year 1 or Year 2. Where schools are biennial intake, teachers are intended to share teaching so as to give each other support and more individual attention to children. There was concern that staff in single-teacher schools would feel isolated and unsupported in their work.

Reducing biennial schools to single-teacher schools is nevertheless one obvious way in which the numbers of teachers in the system and therefore the number of salaries can be reduced. In fact, the VTPS staff workshop considered that from experience so far, teachers with full responsibility for their own class generally performed better than when their teaching responsibilities were shared, which often led to one teacher 'taking it easy' and being rather slack. The workshop therefore recommended a policy of gradually reducing existing biennial schools to one-teacher schools, as well as making all future biennial schools one-teacher schools.

The evaluation endorses this proposal as the best way to effect savings in the system. In the short term, 19 salaries can be saved from existing one-teacher schools in Buin and the Certerets Islands, which amounts to a salary savings of K19,760. In the longer term something like 140 salaries would be saved when schools were operative in all language areas, a savings of K145,600 at present salary levels. It can be seen that reducing teacher numbers in this way can effect substantial financial reductions in annual costs in both the short and longer term.

It is suggested that shedding of teachers in existing biennial schools should proceed either by natural wastage as teachers drop out and are not replaced, or by terminating teachers whose performance is unsatisfactory. It is not recommended that able teachers who have given loyal service should be terminated straight away. This will allow for gradual reductions, easing the budget year by year during the life of the present and succeeding five year plans.

As a policy, it is proposed that during the next seven years to 1990, half the cost of new teacher salaries should be borne out of salary savings in biennial schools. Thus, according to the proposal for the five years 1983-87, shown in Table 6.5, there is a projected need for 6 new teacher salaries, of which 13 would be found through salary savings and a further 13 from provincial government funding, at an average cost of 2.4 new salaries or K2,496 per annum. One permanent additional salary is included to cover the cost of relief teaching in cases of illness etc.

Table 6.5 Projected teacher increase, 1983-1987
(Existing number = 68)

| Year | Teacher Requirement | Number of Salary Savings | New Salaries Required | Cost to Provincial Government |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1983 | +1 | 1 | - | - |
| 1984 | +10(+1)* | 5 | 5(+1)* | K5,200(+1040)* |
| 1985 | +6 | 3 | 3 | 3,120 |
| 1986 | +4 | 2 | 2 | 2,080 |
| 1987 | +4 | 2 | 2 | 2,080 |
| Total | +26 | 13 | 13 | K13,520 |

* One permanent additional salary is required to cover the cost of relief teaching. It would be introduced in 1984 or 1985.

The table projects a greater increase in 1984 than for subsequent years. One reason for this is that the two schools in the Haku area, where trained teachers have been waiting to begin teaching since 1982, and the proposed Central Nasioi dialect schools for which materials have also been prepared, all happen to be annual and therefore two-teacher schools. In subsequent years of the Five Year Plan, from 1985 to 1987, it will be seen that the annual cost to government will be reduced to two new salaries a year, amounting to K2,080 - considerably less than a single community school teacher's salary. In addition, one new supervisor's salary for the Nasioi area will be required during this period, bringing the average additional cost to the government to approximately K3,000 per annum, over the five years.

Any savings in costs beyond the substantial reduction proposed in changing biennial schools to one-teacher schools will require more drastic structural change to the VTPS system. This issue is discussed in the following paragraphs.

b. Integration of VTPS Year 2 with Community Schools

Opinion among S.I.L. staff as to the outcome of reducing VTPS to a one-year independent programme with second year tok ples teaching integrated with Grade 1 in community schools has been divided. Similar uncertainty was expressed at the VTPS staff workshop as regards this option. The consensus of opinion seems to be that it certainly should not be ruled out as a future option, but that considerable caution should be exercised before moving in such a direction as it could easily have serious hidden pitfalls.

It may therefore be useful to indicate some of the potential advantages and disadvantages of such an option.

Advantages of Integrated VTPS/Community Schooling

The effect of 'integration' would be to reduce all Viles Tok Ples Skuls to one-teacher schools. Such integration would enable the scheme to operate without any budget increase over the 1983-87 Five Year Plan, as approximately 18 existing and proposed schools are two-teacher schools. This would allow for considerable savings.

In the longer term savings would be less dramatic, amounting to something like K74,000 with the 40 year plan fully implemented. This is equal to half the savings effected by reducing biennial schools to one-teacher schools. The overall savings of **the two strategies combined** would, however, effect a substantial reduction in the cost of VTPS. It would allow for a teaching force of 205 teachers serving all language areas by the year 2022, as compared to double that number of projected teachers under the present form of two-teacher schools. It would effectively halve the running costs of the scheme.

In addition to cost advantages, it may be argued that greater integration of VTPS with community schools is likely to increase the stability of the system in the longer term, and that it will allow the benefits of tok ples education to more readily influence the curriculum of community schools. This was advocated by the previous National Education Secretary, Mr. Paul Songo, when visiting Viles Tok Ples Skuls in the province. He suggested that tok ples teaching should not stop at Grade 1 but should be continued throughout primary schooling up until Grade 6.

### Disadvantages of Integrated VTPS/Community Schooling

The greatest difficulty associated with integrating Year 2 of VTPS into community school is how to fit it in with a full existing and nationally prescribed English-medium curriculum.

A transitional Grade 1 programme for VTPS students entering after their two years of tok ples education was commissioned by the North Solomons Education Research Project from Mrs. Joan Rule (an experienced curriculum writer formerly at Dauli Teachers' College) in 1981 and is now available for use in Telei and Halia Grade 1 classrooms. It anticipates difficulties in children's learning of English arising out of conflicting sound patterns and written forms in their tok ples, and links exercises making teachers and pupils aware of these contrasts to the existing English lesson plan. Thus, the new programme does not require any rewriting or reorganisation of the English syllabus.

If Year 2 of VTPS was to be integrated with Grade 1, then a thorough-going rethinking and reorganisation of the existing English syllabus would be required, probably for Grade 2 as well as Grade 1. It would be advisable for children, as now, to learn to read and write in tok ples before beginning literacy in English, and maybe to have only oral English lessons during Grade 1, starting reading and writing in English in Grade 2. Such an experiment would need the approval of the national Department of Education, and most importantly, the services of an experienced and competent curriculum writer adequately funded to undertake the task. It should not be beyond the resources of the province to find and pay for such a person, but at least 2 to 3 years would need to be set aside for the writing, trialling and printing of a new Grade 1 and 2 integrated syllabus, and the training of teachers.

The question of teaching staff raises a second point of contention. If Year 2 of VTPS is to be taught by Grade 1 community school teachers, then these teachers will need to have further training which they do not already possess in teaching tok ples.

Not all community school teachers trained in national teachers' colleges have positive attitudes towards tok ples education, considering English as a superior language. In addition, the methods used for teaching literacy in Viles Tok Ples Skuls is different from the English teaching methods taught in the national teacher training colleges. Thus, the re-training of Grade 1 community school teachers would need to be sensitive and thorough, especially in the domain of teachers' attitudes and teaching methods, and would need careful advance planning, funding and organisation.

A further implication is that all Grade 1 teachers would eventually need to be teaching in their home area, and fluent in their tok ples. This is already policy in community schools where there are VTPS intakes. However, unlike VTPS teachers, community school teachers are highly mobile, moving frequently from school to school and between different grades. Unless there is an effort to create a stable Grade 1 teaching force, the province will be constantly involved in re-training numbers of community school Grade 1 teachers to take the tok ples classes. The additional cost alone of this training will need to be seriously considered.

A further consideration is what use would be made of VTPS teachers in biennial schools, who would only have a Year 1 VTPS class every two years. It might be possible for them to act as Grade 1 teacher aides for tok ples classes during their 'off' year, but again this would need careful forethought. There is a danger of VTPS teachers losing the motivation and status which currently gives vitality to the Viles Tok Ples Skuls.

From the point of view of parents who requested the scheme, an important aspect of it lay in the advantages of raising the community school entry age to 9 years, and the Grade 6 leaving age to at least 14 years. Integration of Year 2 VTPS with Grade 1 would therefore have the effect of partially eliminating some of the social and educational advantages of the scheme.

All of the above considerations make it evident that such a far-reaching change in the structure of the early years of education in the province should not be rushed into, but treated with professional caution.

The recommendation of the evaluation is, therefore, that:

1. the question of integration of VTPS Year 2 with Grade 1 of community school be further researched for its practical implications;

2. if it appears sound policy and necessary to effect an integration, then careful advance planning and preparation should be made, and such a policy should not come into effect until new syllabuses are trialled and teachers adequately trained for the task.

c. Community Payment of Teachers

There has been considerable discussion between evaluators and VTPS staff of the option of community payment of teachers. One suggestion made by the former Coordinator, Mr. Levi Golu, was that instead of receiving salaries, teachers might be paid by means of having small plantations started for them, with parents supplying and tending cocoa trees for them. Such an idea is worth consideration, especially in terms of part payment of teachers, but might also raise problems. It would put teachers' rewards well into the future. Difficulties might arise over land, and it might cause ill feeling if there was any neglect on the part of community members responsible for this form of payment. It is also possible that it might prove acceptable in some parts of the province but not in others, leading to some administrative headaches. Nevertheless, it is recommended that a trial be made of the idea in a community willing to try it out in the near future.

Another recommendation made at the VTPS staff workshop concerned areas of the province where teaching materials might be prepared and ready in the local language, but where government funds were not yet available to pay teachers. In these cases, it was suggested that schools should be allowed to start where communities were willing to pay teachers themselves, until such time as government payment was able to start according to plan. Such a policy would ease frustration where parents are anxious to get a school underway.

A current example of such a place is the Ruruvu community in the Rorokas area, where materials are already in preparation, but a school is not proposed until 1986 according to the plan. As community leaders have expressed a strong desire to start a school, and willingness to initially pay teachers themselves, it is recommended that this approach be adopted for the first time at Ruruvu, and that the option of paying teachers in cocoa trees as well as in cash be explored. A similar experiment would be suitable in the Haku area, where two schools, Tanamalo and Eltupan, have materials ready and teachers already trained at Tinputz, but are not due for teacher payments by the provincial government until 1985 and 1986 respectively according to the plan.

### d. Education Tax

A suggestion which has come from the Director of the Educational Research Unit at the University of Papua New Guinea is for the provincial government to consider following the lead of some other countries by introducing a special education tax. A small amount would be levied annually, earmarked specifically for paying teachers where expansion of the school system is necessitated without a corresponding growth in the provincial budget.

Because of the political and bureaucratic ramifications of such a proposal, it is suggested that it should be looked at within the provincial government's Planning Section so that its potential can be explored.

### e. Other Sources of Funding

In addition to the payment of teachers' and supervisors' salaries, another area of community contribution to the financing of Viles Tok Ples Skuls is in the building, equipping and maintenance of classrooms. Initially, an establishment grant was provided to community governments to assist in setting up new schools, but this was terminated in 1982. While it is recommended that communities continue to take this responsibility, it should be noted that some communities are facing considerable expense in erecting new buildings, while others have existing buildings such as unused community school classrooms already available. For communities without these ready resources, sympathetic treatment through the kina for kina scheme appears the best way to encourage progress.

## 6.C. LANGUAGE PLANNING AND MATERIALS DEVELOPMENT

The issue of language priorities in the expansion of VTPS has already been discussed earlier in this chapter. Some further issues and decisions concerning language planning and the development of schools require discussion, however.

### 6.C.1. Language Analysis and Material Preparation

The key questions raised under this heading are, first, who are to be the language workers, and second, which dialects out of the forty-odd dialects of languages in the province are to be selected as targets for the development of separate sets of materials?

a. Availability and Nature of Language Workers

The VTPS scheme has depended since its inception on the assistance and support of the S.I.L. During the early planning stages of the scheme the S.I.L. directors advised of their intention to withdraw active support from about 1986. Since that time, however, the ability of the scheme to sustain itself and the popular support it has received, taken together with encouragement given to the S.I.L. by the provincial government to step up rather than wind down its involvement in recording the languages of the province, have led to a probable longer-term commitment by S.I.L. linguists to this task, which will be invaluable in the future. The appointment of Mrs. Gaye Brown, an experienced teacher, to work full-time on materials preparation and teacher training for VTPS has proved a vital asset, and in general, the dedication, enthusiasm and experience of S.I.L. linguists have been critical in soundly establishing the scheme.

Anticipating a need for the province to draw more on its own resources in the future, however, the research project and provincial government were successful in 1981 in proposing Ruth Kovoho for a scholarship to the East West Centre at the University of Hawaii, to do a masters degree in language and education. The aim was for her to be able to take charge of language and materials development of the VIPS scheme on her return in July 1983, and the success of her studies in Hawaii has made her well fitted for this task, with the support of S.I.L. staff. It is expected that she will be able to play a major role in the development of materials in the Teop/Tinputz dialects, having already almost completed children's books and a teacher's guide in the Teop language.

A third source of linguistic expertise lies in the assistance of non-S.I.L. linguists who have already worked in the province. These include linguists who have worked in the languages of the Mortlocks, Tasman and Fead Islands, Banoni, Nagovisi, Motuna and Telei languages. In addition, visiting linguists may be attracted from time to time from universities in the USA and elsewhere, and one such linguist from the University of Texas will be available in 1984.

The proposed 40-year plan has taken account of the availability of these resources in allocating language priorities. The fact that the costs of S.I.L. as well as visiting linguists are largely covered by their own organisations or by external sources of funding is of invaluable assistance to the scheme, which would otherwise be crippled by the expenses involved in such language work.

### b. Criteria for Choice of Dialects for Materials Preparation

In developing teaching materials for schools, one critical question which must be answered for each language area is, which **dialects** of any language (or sub-languages) require their own sets of materials?

So far, this question has not posed serious problems, as the main languages tackled - those of Halia and Telei speakers - are relatively large and homogeneous ones. The Nasioi language is broken into a number of distinct dialects, but the scheme has the benefit at this point of two long-serving S.I.L. linguists, Konrad and Phyllis Hurd, who are able to clarify the extent of differences between dialects and to assist in making the necessary choices.

The scheme will be faced with difficult choices to make in the future, however, initially in regard to the Teop/Tinputz and Rotokas language areas, where new schools are proposed in the second 5-year plan involving at least 14 dialects and sub-dialects between these three languages.

What criteria should be used to make such decisions? Three aspects of the choice are of evident importance. These are:

### Linguistic Similarities

Linguistic analysis is needed to determine how critical the differences are between dialects. This must be related to the reading method used by tok ples schools, particularly in regard to the sound systems of different dialects. Can the same books be used without causing a sense of 'foreignness' and confusion for teachers and children?

### Community Feeling

How much importance parents place on their children retaining the distinct differences in their dialects in learning to read and write their languages must be considered. Does it matter to them if, say, children belonging to a dialect with few speakers become literate in the forms of a larger neighbouring dialect? This requires consultation and discussion.

### Composition of Children in Mixed Schools

In some cases there will be mixtures of dialect speakers in the one tok ples skul, corresponding to the intake of the local community school. Where there are very few children speaking a particular small dialect, it may be a necessary economy to teach only one major dialect in that school, particularly with respect to teachers. if for example, the school was a one-teacher biennial school, it would be difficult for the teacher to have to teach the same lesson twice from different books for a few children, even if that teacher felt sufficiently at ease in both dialects to teach them.

Each of these three aspects will need to be weighed up in making choices. The answers will have a bearing on the demand for linguists and material writers in each language, and thus, when it will be possible to open new schools in different dialect areas. It is possible, for example, that pockets of dialect speakers may have to stay behind their neighbours in obtaining schools if linguists are not immediately available to prepare books in their particular dialects. This problem needs to be highlighted when efforts are made to attract and allocate linguists to particular parts of the province. However, once materials are prepared in the main ('proper') dialect of a language, it is possible for much of the work of primer writing in other dialects to be carried out by dialect speakers from those areas under the supervision of linguists. This is currently happening in the Haku-speaking area of Buka.

### 6.C.2. Multi-Lingual Schools and Town Schools

Another area where awkward decisions will need to be made relates to the situation of schools where children in the intake may speak not only different dialects of a language, but quite distinct languages. This situation is likely to raise different problems in urban or district centres as against rural settings.

#### a. Multi-lingual Rural Schools

Language overlap may occur in rural schools, where the intake of a community school, to which a tok ples school intake corresponds, is drawn from different language catchment areas. This may be on account either of the placement of the community school or the migration into the area of families from another language area. This is likely to be only an occasional problem, but is known to be the case in the Wakunai area, for example, where there is an overlap of Teop and Rotokas speakers.

Where there are sufficient children speaking both languages to justify or necessitate teaching two languages in a tok ples school, it should be policy for materials and teachers to be available in both languages before the school is opened. It is evident that this situation will require a doubling of teachers and classroom space, and thus presents something of a problem to communities. It is proposed that special consideration be given by the provincial government to these few schools, by assisting community governments to provide the extra classroom space needed.

There is likely also to be the odd child who finds his way into a tok ples school who is from a quite different language area.

These cases so far do not seem to have presented any problems. At Laitaro there are children from the Simbu Province who have joined the Viles Tok Ples Skul and learnt Telei literacy alongside the Buin children. Such a situation does not create the same difficulties for children as learning English, because they hear the tok ples spoken around them all day in the local environment. This applies similarly to children who have learnt only Tok Pisin as their first language at home.

b. Town Schools

Schools with a multi-lingual intake are more problematic in town areas and government stations (district headquarters) where public servants from different parts of the province and country are residing. So far only one school has been set up close to a town setting, which is Hahela VTPS near Buka Passage. It is interesting to note that while there were anxieties and complaints initially expressed by parents, after several years there seems to be general acceptance of all children learning Halia (or at least an absence of complaint).

No attempt has been made yet to open a school in Buin town, although Telei is taught elsewhere in the district, and it is clear that decisions in schools in the Arawa, Kieta and Panguna areas may be fraught with difficulty. It seems evident that the languages taught in these schools should be decided only after consultation with parents, and in relation to the composition of children in the schools and what teaching materials are available.

In the case of a small town such as Buin, consideration has been given to the possibility of teaching Tok Pisin as an alternative in addition to a tok ples (Telei), although the advantages of this are not certain unless Tok Pisin has been the first language of children at home, and the cost of extra teachers and materials will be a further burden on the budget. If this option is rejected, the question arises as to whether VTPS should then be compulsory for all children before entering Grade 1. Mixed Grade 1 classes will be very difficult for teachers to handle, as some children will already be literate when they enter while others will not, and therefore a choice in the matter is not recommended.

Children learning Tok Pisin instead of tok ples would at least have learnt to read and write before entering community school.

In the case of town areas such as Arawa and Panguna, with a multiplicity of languages, the choice seems to be between schools offering the language of the area and/or Tok Pisin, or no schools at all. Given the expansion of the school-age population in these places and the cost of providing teachers, classrooms and materials for VTPS where there is not the clear advantage of children beginning their education in the mother tongue, the case for withholding VTPS in these two areas is a strong one.

The tentative recommendations of the evaluation are therefore:

1. That in the cases of small towns and district headquarters, where schools have a substantial proportion of children who do not speak the local language, consultation should be held with community school Boards of Management and community governments (as well as Parents and Citizens bodies where they are active), as to the desirablility of starting a Viles Tok Ples Skul. The option of Tok Pisin classes should be discussed, but it seems inevitable that the extra costs of purchasing books and paying teachers, as well as providing classroom space would have to be largely met by parents of children choosing this option.

2. That in the case of Arawa and Panguna, VTPS should not be attempted unless strong pressure arises from parents in the future. It is noteworthy that there are already cases of senior public servants sending their children home to attend VTPS, or to schools outside the town area. It is recommended that the percentage of Nasioi-speaking children in the two community schools (Kieta and Tubiana) close to Kieta town should be ascertained, as well as parental attitudes towards starting VTPS. In cases where there are two Grade 1 classes as at Tubiana, it might be possible to divide children into 2 streams, one stream going through VTPS and the other straight to Grade 1 according to parental wishes.

### 6.C.3. Preparation of Readers and Cultural Studies

The main task of preparing teaching materials, that is, pre-reading and writing books, primers, readers and teachers' guides has so far been undertaken by S.I.L. linguists together with VTPS supervisors and local informants. One area, however, in which the scheme would benefit from more local participation is in the preparation of readers with cultural content for children. There is a wealth of local knowledge of stories for children as well as of the environment which can be put into readers, and thus allow more local influence in the shaping of children's learning.

During the 1979 community survey in Buin, there was consensus regarding the need for cultural committees to be set up in community government areas to develop the program of Viles Tok Ples Skuls. This idea now needs active encouragement, both with regard to preparing readers and also for the development of the cultural studies side of the VTPS curriculum. While a certain amount can be done by young teachers in this field, it is not likely to properly develop until activity and concern are generated by local committees. Supervisors supported by the VTPS Coordinator and S.I.L. staff can play a central role in encouraging the establishment of these committees.

A lead has been given by an active Halia literacy committee, which was initially encouraged by S.I.L. staff, and which has been producing reading material for schools, having obtained some assistance for publishing costs from CUSO. Funds for publications from this committee were also placed high on the list of the Halia Community Government's budget priorities for 1982, and there was some discouragement when the request was removed without explanation during a community government budget review, in the absence of the community government policy officer who has given it strong support. Nevertheless, the success with which this committee has operated gives a lead which should be followed up and emulated, wherever possible using cheap duplicating methods for publication.

### 6.C.4. Maintenance of Tok Ples Studies in Community School

Frequent concern has been expressed from a number of sources as to how the tok ples literacy acquired by children is to be maintained during their community school years.

The former national Secretary for Education, Mr. Paul Songo, during his 1982 visit to the province told the VTPS Coordinator that he would like to see tok ples studies continued right through to Grade 6, and that VTPS teachers should have access to community teachers' colleges for this purpose. This idea did not at the time seem feasible because of the anticipated demands of VTPS teachers for increased salaries if they were to teach full-time. The question of how to maintain and foster children's tok ples literacy nevertheless remains pressing. Reference has already been made to the new Grade 1 syllabus which has been prepared by Mrs Joan Rule. This syllabus, however, is concerned more with smoothing the transition from tok ples to English literacy than with maintenance of children's reading and writing in tok ples. Changes in the 1983 National Education Act now smooth the way for the introduction of tok ples classes in the community-based syllabus of community schools in all grades, if a suitable programme and teachers to teach it can be prepared. It is already included in principle in the experimental programme for community schools but not elaborated there.

There are two serious constraints on the development of tok ples classes in community school. One is the time, cost and expertise required for curriculum development. The other is the fact that many teachers are not teaching in their own language area, and so the burden of taking these classes must fall on a few teachers across grades. Under these circumstances, the best approach might be one of creative writing classes, where children are encouraged to write small stories about their life and environment in tok ples.

The best of their work could be duplicated and made into books, which could then eventually provide reading matter for other classes, for example, children from higher grades providing reading materials for those from lower grades. This would require the development of some form of fairly simple teacher's guide.

The whole area of the maintenance of tok ples in community schools now requires further study and development, and should be given priority in the work of the VTPS Coordinator.

## 6.D. RECOMMENDATIONS

A summary of the recommendations put forward in the chapter is as follows:

### 6.D.1. EXPANSION OF VTPS

1. A period of 40 years is proposed to phase in tok ples schools throughout the province, starting with the 1983-87 Five Year Plan. This allows for one VTPS corresponding to each community school by the year 2022.

2. To meet this target, an average of around 4 new schools a year should be planned, requiring an increase of 5 to 6 new teachers per annum.

3. Approximately half the cost of new teachers' salaries should be found from savings within the present system, leaving an average 3 new salaries a year to be met by the provincial government. To this should be added the cost of one new supervisor's salary every 5 years.

4. The average cost of this increase in salaries to the provincial government should be equivalent to funding one new community school teacher's salary a year.

5. Priorities for the introduction of VTPS in different language areas should depend on the availability of linguists, public demand, and even-handedness in starting schools in different parts of the province. Specific priorities are proposed in Table 6.1.

### 6.D.2. FINANCING OF VTPS EXPANSION

1. The main means of reducing budget costs while expanding VTPS in the short term should be by making biennial schools one-teacher schools.

2. As a longer term means, integration of VTPS Year 2 with Grade 1 of community school should be further researched for its practical implications. If it appears sound policy and necessary to effect an integration, such a policy should not come into effect until new syllabuses are trialled and teachers adequately trained for the task.

3. Teachers' salaries should be maintained at their present level but reviewed during the preparation of each subsequent Five Year Plan.

4. Two levels of payment for supervisors should be institutionalised. Supervisors living in town and/or with an especially large number of schools to supervise should be paid at a higher level than village-based supervisors with a limited number of schools to supervise. The final projected number of supervisors should be reduced to a maximum of seven.

5. Where a community has teaching materials prepared in its language and is anxious to start a school, but government funds are not yet available to pay teachers, it should be allowed to go ahead and pay teachers using its own resources, until such time as the provincial government assumes payment. This option of paying teachers 'in kind' (e.g. by planting and tending cocoa trees for them) instead of in cash should be proposed to parents and community leaders as an alternative for experimentation on a trial basis.

6. The Provincial Government Planning Section should explore the possibilities of a special education tax for funding expansion of the school system.

### 6.D.3. LANGUAGE AND DIALECT DECISIONS

1. In choosing which dialects have separate materials developed, the criteria of linguistic similarities, community feeling and the composition of children in mixed schools should all be taken into account.

2. Consultation should be held with community school Boards of Management and community governments as to the desirability of starting VTPS in small towns and district headquarters. The option of Tok Pisin classes financed by parents should be discussed.

3. VTPS should not be considered in Arawa and Panguna unless strong pressure arises from parents. Research should be undertaken in the Kieta and Tubiana community school catchment areas as to the language composition of children and parental attitudes.

4. The establishment of local cultural committees to develop cultural studies and readers for VTPS should be actively encouraged in language areas.

5. Further study and development relating to the maintenance of tok ples literacy by children in community school should be given high priority in the work of the VTPS Coordinator.

## Chapter 7

## CONCLUSION

The history of educational language policy formation in Papua New Guinea has repeated that found in multilingual countries throughout the world: language policy is always dependent upon the (never purely linguistic) goals of the policy-makers. The earliest educational policy makers in Papua New Guinea, the various missions, wanted to foster locally-based religious proselytizing, and so used that which provided the best means of reaching the hearts and minds of those in village societies, the local indigenous languages. The colonial government later wished to institute change in the socio-economic sector: competence in the colonial language meant the indigene's ability to communicate with plantation owners and his access to a closer relationship to and identification with the colonial mother country, leading to a shared interest in the colonial power's economic goals. English became the sole medium of instruction.

Political independence brought the apparently competing goals of establishing an independent nation-state led by indigenous technicians, bureaucrats and politicians which could take its place in the modern industrial world, and maintaining and revaluing the cultural identity of numerous unique groups of people only loosely aligned by national boundaries. The former position demanded, at least to its advocates, the use of a unifying world language in education -- English, and the latter suggested the official educational policy support of the many indigenous languages. The debate over language policy waged throughout most of the early 1970s, until in the end, influenced by conservative politicians and expatriates in the education department and the sheer logistics of including the over 700 indigenous mother tongues in education, the 1976 Education Plan virtually excluded the use of local languages in education.

With the establishment of provincial governance came the removal of the logistical impossibility: the number of languages found in any one province did not seem so staggering an obstacle. With it also came a change in the policy-makers, or at least a new shared role in policy-making. Regionally-elected provincial governments could now have considerably more say in the educational decision-making process. The establishment of the Viles Tok Ples Skul scheme was dependent upon these changes - the North Solomons Province, one of the most educationally advanced, economically developed, and politically separatist regions of the country, utilized its decentralized educational decision-making powers to establish a mother tongue medium instructional programme to teach literacy in local languages and use the culture and traditional values of the local populace as curriculum content.

The process by which the VTPS scheme came into existence is particularly important. The provincial government, composed of North Solomons citizens and owing its continued existence to the people of the North Solomons regions, was now empowered with educational decision-making; it chose to go to the people it served to determine policy for education. This was an unprecedented move in the North Solomons, and indeed in most countries in the world. The vast majority of language policy, where not determined by political expediency, is formulated within a centralized government agency, with responsibilities for language planning completely in the hands of professional educators, planners, and curriculum developers. Such has certainly been the case historically in Papua New Guinea, as successive waves of new language policies were proposed or instituted by variously inclined educational agencies or administrators. VTPS has offered an alternative to that pattern. It has shown that, given government willingness to listen and respond, careful field-based research can allow people to make their own decisions about the education of their children within the framework of a national or provincial education system.

The North Solomons research, with its emphasis on village-based interview, group meetings, and public forums, served not only as a sounding board, but as a catalyst to stimulate thoughtful reflection and encourage group consensus concerning educational issues. Thus, with the research findings as a guide, educational innovation in the North Solomons began, not solely with expert opinion, theoretical constructs, political expediency, or other conventional precedents, but with the thinking and participation of the people who themselves would be affected by subsequent policy decisions.

The educational policy chosen by the North Solomons was well-founded on precedents in other countries. Past research has indicated that children who begin learning literacy in their own language adapt better socially than their peers who begin in a foreign language, and are almost always found to be superior in academic achievement if they are tested after a sufficient number of years of school instruction. But has VTPS fulfilled these favourable expectations?

The preceding evaluation has indicated that although there are a number of technical problems , the VTPS scheme shows great promise. It is too soon to give definitive answers about the programme's long-term consequences, but thus far the scheme appears to show benefits on at least three levels - to the individual child, the village community, and the province as a whole.

Children appear to be learning the academic skills taught in VTPS, that is, they have acquired literacy skills in their own language and seem to be able to transfer those skills to Tok Pisin and, since Grade 1 teachers assess them to be better speakers and readers of English, to that language as well. They appear to adjust more quickly to community school and are claimed by their Grade 1 teachers to be not only more proficient at learning English, but to be more alert, better behaved, quicker to understand and follow the teacher's directions, better at handwriting skills, and more confident in speaking out in class. Parents perceive VTPS children to be more responsive to and interested in cultural norms and are proud that their spoken and written tok ples is their 'real' tok ples, and not what they consider to be the 'hap-kas' (mixed) language spoken by community school children who have not attended VTPS.

Although community involvement in VTPS has not yet been as great as was hoped for, VTPS has served the important role of making villages believe formal education can be relevant to their lives. Whether VTPS and other innovative provincial education programmes can address the social disruption identified by village people as the major reason for community concern cannot yet be ascertained. However, it can be stated almost unequivocally that VTPS is seen as having an important role in village communities - one which communities would be **very** unwilling to give up.

VTPS appears to represent moves toward maintaining community cohesiveness - especially cross-generational cohesiveness. Even when young people move away from their villages to attend high school or work in town, older village dwellers say, they will be able to keep in contact through letter-writing in tok ples, the language that their parents are sure to comprehend. Older village people also believe that the acquisition of competent oral tok ples skills and tok ples literacy by the younger generation will allow them to serve as translators of the modern world for those villages who remain at home. "They can write books in tok ples to explain what they learn in school," say the adults. The acquisition of tok ples literacy will also allow for the preservation of tradition, say the big men. In Hanahan a meeting of the elders demanded that 'culture books', written or dictated by the elders, be produced and used in the VTPS setting and later in community schools to insure the maintenance of the local culture.

The last two points deserve additional comment. It has sometimes been suggested by social analysts that VTPS-like schooling represents a conservative force - an attempt to retreat into the past. Interviews with villagers who support the scheme counter this supposition, however. The people in Buka and Buin seem rather to desire a synthesis of the old and the new. They wish their children to acquire modern knowledge, but wish that they also acquire the ability to utilize that knowledge in the village setting. To do so, they must maintain their ability to function in more traditional settings: they must know and follow the local social and cultural rules, they must learn to speak and write their language properly, and they must not "get big-headed, thinking they are better then village people just because they can speak English". Evidence of the desired synthesis can also be found in the elders' wish to use a tool of the modern world literacy - to facilitate a locally identified goal, the preservation of local culture.

Benefits of the VTPS scheme to the province as a whole can be traced through the scheme's benefits to individual children and to village communities. Obviously, if the scheme can improve children's ability to benefit from education, it can provide more effective schooling and a greater return on the educational kina. Similarly, community-based approval of the scheme increases the likelihood of village support for educational initiatives, thus the amount of locally-provided resources. A final benefit to the province is the not surprising tendency of local regions to give greater support to a provincial government it perceives as addressing local concerns and needs.

Apart from identifying the potential benefits of the VTPS scheme, this evaluation has also focussed on determining whether the scheme is viable as an institution. Administratively, after several personnel changes, the scheme seems to have settled into a workable plan. The new Coordinator, just back from Master's level study at the University of Hawaii, is providing superb leadership for the programme. New proposed job descriptions for the remaining staff, if adopted, appear to provide a division of labour suitable to the scheme as a whole. The continuing support of the S.I.L. in undertaking language studies and assisting in the training of teachers will also prove invaluable in the programme's future development.

Funding issues are somewhat more complicated. When the scheme was initiated, the then relatively high level of provincial income from copper revenues was expected to continue. In more recent years this income has dropped substantially and is expected to drop even lower. Combined with the mandate to expand the programme so the language areas not already included will not feel discriminated against, the situation becomes difficult. Recommendations made herein propose a 40-year expansion plan (with three to five new schools yearly,), coupled with possible suggestions to provide more revenues or lessen expenses. These, explained further in the text and the summary recommendations, include the consideration of community payment of teachers, reduction of teachers in biennial schools, integrating VTPS and community schooling, and levying an education tax. The future viability and expansion of the scheme demands the adoption of some form of funding support to ease the demands on the provincial government coffers. Plans in this direction, however, as discussed in the text, should be made very cautiously to insure continued programme success.

In summary, despite its constraints, it is evident from the data presented herein that the Viles Tok Ples Skul scheme of the North Solomons Province is a viable institution that has made considerable progress towards meeting its declared goals. As important as that is, however, the stated goals of a programme seldom encompass its true significance. Given its particular historical and sociocultural context, what is the more fundamental significance of VTPS to the rest of Papua New Guinea or to other Third World multilingual nations?

The scheme is significant first in how it was conceived. VTPS shows that multilingual countries faced with the thorny problem of determining language choice in education could gain considerable insight in their decision-making by going directly to those served by the educational system. Certainly it can be (and often has been) argued that rural, uneducated community people lack the experience and training to make important policy decisions. As the people of the North Solomons demonstrate, it could just as convincingly be argued that social groups usually gravitate toward good decisions on their own. Certainly parents and community members must be given access to data which can inform their decision-making, but once this is provided, their advice on their own aspirations, motivations, and expectations is invaluable in structuring workable learning environments for their children.

A second significance of the VTPS scheme in a newly emergent nation with limited resources and more than 700 different languages is that it exists at all. What made mother tongue education realizable in Papua New Guinea was first, decentralization of educational policy-making and administrative powers, and second, the community enthusiasm for the scheme which inspired enough support that buildings, teachers, and other resources could be acquired at the local level. Certainly, were the backing of the people not behind the project, it could not have progressed as it has, an important lesson to those wishing to engage in educational reform.

The third significance of the scheme is that it demonstrates that acknowledging, even celebrating, the cultural differences of a nation need not be politically divisive. When people are assisted to maintain their sense of group identity, they are more, not less, likely to feel a part of the national body that supported their local aspirations.

The final significant aspect of the VTPS scheme to be discussed here is its resolution of the colonial language versus mother tongue debate. Neither language can be sacrificed for the sake of the other when there is an evident desire to create a synthesis between the old and the new, the familiar and the foreign. North Solomons people have striven to translate the modern world into their reality, and incorporate their reality into the modern world.

To conclude, the Viles Tok Ples Skul programme has proven that, given the opportunity, a people has every desire and capacity to participate in the planning of their future. In choosing an educational alternative such as mother tongue medium instruction, communities are frequently choosing not only a curriculum innovation, but a way, in their estimation, to improve the quality of their lives. In the case of the North Solomons, communities are seeking not to retreat or withdraw from modern development, but rather to reassert pride in their distinctive culture, social forms, and language as the firm ground on which to meet and accommodate the demands of modernity. There is never a guarantee that a particular language or educational policy will 'work', but when that policy is backed by the will of the people it is to affect, there is not a better prospect for its success.

# APPENDIX A

## SAMPLE QUESTIONNAIRES USED IN THE RESEARCH

## PARENTS QUESTIONNAIRE

MIM:(NAME)__________ SIKUURU ENIURO:(PREVIOUS SCHOOLINC)__________
MOI:(AGE)__________ LO TOKPLES GERE NNO SIKUURU ENUI__________
SEX:__________ DID YOU ATTEND TOK PLES SCHOOL WITH THE MISSION?__________

ITEKENE OPOGE (Children in the household)

MOI(AGE) SEX Lo tagere logomma tuare omoto aiaire tege logoro un?
How do you make your livelihood in the village?__________

1. Looge omoto ononogei tok ples sikuru nno merague? Oiroo? Omotoroguo?
   Do you think tok ples school is a good idea? Why?

2. Lo ia tok ples sikuru ege tuntumoi nno mani pempempe?
   Do you think the tok ples school here is running well?

3. Omoto mau ama mani pegui/apagorogui?
   How could it be made better?

4. Lo ako logomma ite baake mommoruku?
   What kinds of things is your child learning?

5. Aike itekenee morukaguine nno noke mugupa etano touno minmigino pammoi nokegee?
   Are there some other things children should be learning in VTPS, but they are not learning now? What are these?

6. Lo itekene mugupa taa touno tok ples sikuru gere piroi loba kogogaree Grade One gere piroi nokege? Egu agino o nno anagii iko itekene VTPS gere aike amanoko mommoruka?
   Do you have older children who did not go to VTPS but went straight to Grade One? (If yes) How are the VTPS children different from children who did not go to tok ples skul? Do you think they are learning more or less?

Egu loba tee lakaro mugupa touno ligomma' kaikai peipeine toi lakarcrosi.
Now I want to ask you some questions about different languages.

7. Iko itekene tai paigomma tokples tee aike kegurarei oito torekarei nno kogogasie? Omoto toio tapuum?
   Should children learn to read and write tok ples? How will it help them?

8. Iko itekene Community School gere tai tok pisin aike miginoparei nno kogogasie?
   Should children be taught pidgin in community school? How will it help them?

9. Tee itekene tai English aike kegurarei oito komparei egu kaigarei nno kogogasie? Tee itekene Grade 6 kotaroi tee English komparei torekarei kaigarei morukarci, ta ikonke morukasi omoto toio anapagotopai tege unge tagere mu tutugenke tuare? Omoto toio taa tatapu lei?
   Should children learn to read and write English? For children who finish school at Grade 6 and live and work here in the village, how will they use the ability to read and write English in their daily life? Do you think this is useful to them?

10. Lo taa VTPS noga noke piro nke nkei? Agino o, toio agii nne teguo miro nkomino?
    Have you ever been to visit the tok ples school here?

11. Lo taa VTPS nogo ninu oi nomma nno kaikaigotopei? Aike paake ononogoipereguo?
    Do you ever talk to the VTPS teacher? What about?

12. Teege tisiagai aparo lee tee loikene apogigu unna tee itekene Buininke Custom noke miginopem mau touno nokerei uguo. Looge oiro, anagii iko teguo?
    The teachers say they trv to get people to come into the school and teach the children **pasin tumbuna** but no one will come. Why do you think that is? What could encourage people to come in?

13. Looge tee onoono touno kogogasi ege iagere VTPS anapagoromoi nno noke mommorukei?
    Can you think of any other problems with the VTPS school here?

14. Tee aike touno lakarorosine mugupa lopa nne teparei io ioruine nokegee tee ono ono VTPS onogoipasi?
    Is there anything else you would like to tell me about the VTPS school here?

## TEACHER SURVEY

NAME____________________________ MALE__________
AGE__________ FEMALE__________
MARRIED?__________
HOW MANY CHILDREN?__________

SCHOOLING: What grade did you to to?

Grade 6_______
Grade 7_______
Grade 8_______
Grade 9_______
Grade 10______
Grade 12______
Teachers' College______

Did you ever teach before you became a tokples teacher?

yes________ where?____________________
no________

What is the name of your school?__________________________________

Who asked you to become a tok ples teacher?________________________

What are your biggest problems as a tok ples teacher?

________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________

## ASKIM BILONG OL TISA

### Personal History

Tokim mi long family bilong yu.
Hamas long family bilong yu? Hamas man? Hamas meri?

Yu wanem namba bilong family?

Papamama bilong yu i bin winim wanem gret long skul?

Taim yu bin yangpela yet yu bin laik mekim wanem taim yu kamap bikpela?

Yu laik mekim wanem bihain long faivpela yia i kam?

Pastaim tru yu bin me im wanem bipo yu kamap priskul tisa?

Watfo na yu kamap priskul tisa?

Bai yu mekim wanem sapos yu no bin kamap tokples tisa?

Yu kam long wanem ples?

Yu bin stap long arapela ples o nogat?

Yu bin visitem long narapela ples?

Yu save long ologeta pasin bilong tumbuna? Husat i skulim yu?

### Relationship to Community

I gat sampela samting i senis long yu taim yu kamap tisa? Mi sapos ol man i save act narakain o wankain tasol olgeta taim bihain yu kamap tias?

Ol papamama o ol narapela man bilong komuniti save toktok long yu long ol samting yu mekim long clasrum o nogat?

I gat samplea man i save kam lukluk long priskul o nogat? Ol husat? Na watfo?

Yu ting yu kisim saport long komuniti gavman?

Yu ting yu kisim saport long Board of Management?

na ol papamama? Watfo yu tok olsem?

Yu save toktok wantaim sampela komuniti skul tisa o nogat? Long wanem?

Wantaim Headmaster tu?

Yu ting olsem yupela sindaun gutpela wantaim ol lain bilong kommuniti skul?

Yu save stap gut wantaim arapela priskul tisa?

Yu wantaim arapela priskul tisa sampela taim i save wok wantaim o yupela wanwan i save wok long clasrum bilong yupela yet?

Wanem samting i save kamap sapos wanpela long yupela i no kamap long skul?

## Teacher Training

Yu bin go long Tinputz? Long hamas taim yu bin stap long training?

Wanem samting i bin gutpela long Tinputz?

Wanem samting i no bin gutpela?

Yu save usim wanem samting yu bin lainim long Tinputz training long klasrum bilong yu? Inap yu soim mi?

Ol wanem samting i no bin gutpela na yu no save yusim?

Ol wanem samting yu ting bai yu laik senisim long dispela training? Bai yu laik addim sampela samting?

Yu bin go long language na literacy training wantaim Jan Allen or Margie Griffin?

Husat gin i bin skulim yu?

Hamas wik yu bin stap long dispela literacy training?

Ol i holim dispela training we?

Yu bin mekim wanem long hap?

Yu save yusim wanem samting yu bin lainim long dispela training long klasrum bilong yu?

Wanem samting i bin gutpela?

Wanem samting i no bin gutpela?

Ol wanem samting yu ting bai yu laik senisim? Na bai yu laik addim?

Na literacy training na training long Tinputz ol i kolim em preservice bikos yu save lainim dispela bifo yu statim tis. Na tu i gat inservice bihain yu kamap tisa, laka? (Na dispela inservice yu bin mekim long April wantiam John na Levi i save halivim yu o nogat?) (Na dispela inservice yu bin mekim long Oktoba wantaim Michael i save halivim yu o nogat?)

Yu ting olsem bai yu laik senisim wanem samting long inservice?

Training nau i tripela wik long literacy bifo yu kamap tisa, na bihain, wanpela wik long inservice long April. Yu ting dispela timetable em i gutpela o yu timg olsem bai yu laik senisim em?

Yu ting olsem em i inap training o tumas?

Yu ting em i moa beta sapos yu gat moa taim long preservice training bipo yu stat long tis na liklik taim long inservice moa taim long tupela, o wanem?

Yu save kisim inap lukluk raun?

Yu ting yu laikim moa lukluk raun long John?

long Rachel?

long Levi?

## Materials, Methods, Timetables

Yu gat inap samting bilong yusim long klasrum?

Wanem samting gen yu ting yu nitim long klasrum?

Yu gat samting yu no save yusim?

Yu save usim wanem long olgeta taim?

Yu ting olsem ol teachers guides i gutpela?

Ol i isi long yupela long bihainim?

Na i gat inap activiti o wok insait long en long givim long pikinini?

I gat samplea samting yu laik senisim long ol dispela teacher guides?

Yu save tisim "cultural studies"? Olsem wanem?

Yu bin tisim wanem lesson long cultural studies long dispela yia?

Yu save kisim ol pikinini i go long ples long cultural studies?

Ol lapun man o meri i save kam tu long skul long stori long ol pikinini?

Yu bin mekim wanem long ol science lesson long dispela yia?

Yu ting olsem ol we bilong tis yu bihainim i gutpela o yu ting bai yu senisim sampela samting long ol?

Yu ting ol buk bilong ol pikinini i gutpela o yu ting bai yu laik senisim sempela samting long ol?

Ol wanem lesson yu painim long maths i hat tru long pikinini long kisim?

Ol wanem lesson yu painim i hat tru long (pre) reading long ol pikinini long kisim?

Long ologeta lesson bilong yu, yu painim wanem lesson i hat long kisim?

Wanem lesson yu painim isi long tisim?

Yupela i save pilaim sampela gem? Ol wanem kain?

## Planning and Structure

Yu save bihainim program na time table olsem ol i bin putim o yu yu save painim olsem em i gutpela sapos yu bai mekim sampela senis?

Ol wanem senis yu bin mekim?

Inap yu tokim mi olsem wanem yu planim ol lessons yu save tisim?

Soim mi wanem lesson yu tisim nau.

Yu nitim halivim long olsem wanem bai yu planim ol lesson bilong yu?

Yu inap skulim ol pikinini long wanpela bikpela grup tasol. O yu inap divaidim ol tu long ol liklik grup bai ol narapela i mekim samting i narakain long ol narapela. Yu laik bai yu skulim ol olsem wanem? Long wanpela bikpela o long liklik grup?

Yu save usim ol liklik grup long wanem wok yu givim ol pikinini?

Em i hat long yusim liklik grup? Olsem wanem?

Yu painim ol pikinini i save bihainim toktok bilong yu o yu painim ol i save bikhet?

Yu save mekim wanem sapos ol i no bihainim toktok bilong yu?

## Children

Ol husat pikinini i bin gutpela long klas bilong yu?

Ol i gutpela olsem wanem?

Ol husat pikinini i no save gutpela long klas?

Watfo na ol i no gutpela?

I gat sampela pikinini i save lusim planti taim? Yu save watfo na ol i save lusim skul?

Yu save toktok wantaim ol papamama long ol pikinini bilong ol? Long wanem?

## General

Tokples skul long hia i save wok olsem wanem?

Wanem samting bai i mekim em moa beta?

Wanem gutpela hap i mekim tokples tisa?

Wanem hap i mekim nogut?

Yu ting ol man long komuniti i laikim skul? Watfo na yu ting olsem?

Yu ting wanem samting i bikpela tru long ol pininini long lainim long tom ples skul?

Yu ting olsem wanem long wok bilong yu olsem tokples tisa bai halivim ol pikinini olsem wanem long laip bilong ol?

## BOARD OF MANAGEMENT, TRADITIONAL LEADERS, COMMUNITY GOVERNMENT CHAIRMAN

Name______________________
Age______________
Sex______________

Previous Schooling____________
Did he/she attend tok ples school?
Children in VTPS?

Children in household

Age Sex

How does he/she make livelihood in village?

Position?

1. Do you think the tok ples school here is running well?

2. How can it be improved?

3. What kind of person makes a good tok ples school teacher? How were the ones here chosen?

4. What are the most important things children should learn in VTPS? Why are each of these important?

5. Are there any other things that are important for them to learn?

6. Do you think children are learning these things?

7. Some people have said before that the national government took over all control of what children learned in school. Do you think people here have more say (power) over what children are taught now that there are tok ples schools, or does the government still control the schools completely?

8. What things in your custom and culture (pasim tumbuna) do you want your children to learn?

9. How should VTPS teach them?

10. Are there some things which should be taught to children, but not in VTPS?

11. Are there some customs which children should not learn?

12. Which are these?

13. How did children learn important things in the past?

14. (If Upe is mentioned) Some say when boys leave school at grade 6 they just get into trouble. Do you think this is true? Would it be a good idea to bring Upe initiation back? (If no) Why not? (If yes) Why hasn't this been done?

## QUESTIONS ABOUT LANGUAGE ATTITUDES AND USE

15. Which languages do you speak?

16. Which languages do you read? (For what purpose) When do you read them?

17. Which languages do you write? For what purposes?

18. Is it important for children to learn to speak pidgin? What will they use it for?

19. Is it important for children to learn to speak English? If they stay in the village, how will it help them to know how to speak English?

20. Should children learn to read and write tok ples? How will it help them. (For what purposes will they use it?

21. Should children learn to read and write English? For children who finish school at grade 6 and live and work here in the village, how will they use the ability to read and write English in their day to day like? Do you think this is useful for them?

## QUESTIONS ABOUT GENERAL VALUE OF SCHOOLING

22. What sort of people should children be when they have gone through tok ples school and finished grade 6?

23. How should education help them to help (contribute to) their village?

24. When the University research team went round the province 3 years ago (in 1979), these are some of the things which people said were important about VTPS, I would like you to say now which of these things **you** think are important or not important. Which are **very** important?

    a. Children should learn the good behaviour of their community. (Is this happening?)

    b. Will make them proud of their own language.

    c. Will let them write letters and name things in their own language.

    d. Easier for them to learn to read and write and do well in school if they start in their own language.

    e. Better for them to start their education by learning their own custom and culture and language, and go on later to learn English and Western ideas. (Check against 1979 findings)

# APPENDIX B

## FINDINGS OF THE 1979 SURVEY
(NORTH SOLOMONS EDUCATION RESEARCH PROJECT)

The response to the question asked in the 1979 survey, "Should children be taught to read and write in their own language as well as in English?", was as follows:

| Yes | No | N/A |
|---|---|---|
| 73(90%) | 5(6%) | 3(4%) |

N=81

Reasons given by individual respondents why children should learn their tok ples included the following:

a. to be able to communicate more freely in both languages; it will also enable them to uphold their traditional values and customs through children knowing their language.

b. to give them the opportunity to be able to read, write and communicate in both languages. Nowadays most children are not able to speak fluently nor are they able to read and write in own language. Therefore it is good to learn it in schools.

c. it is good to know and speak two languages (i.e. English or vernacular in this case) rather than learning and being able to speak just one language.

d. it is good to have a knowledge of their own language before they put emphasis on English and it will also be easier in learning English later (after they have had training in reading and writing in their own language).

e. children could also write to each other in both English and vernacular if they learn them both.

f. it is not good enough just to learn one language.

g. so that they could translate one language to another. Also because they could learn better and be able to understand our customs and new ways also, if they learn in our language first, then English.

h. they would learn English much faster after if they start off with vernacular and Pidgin and eventually to English.

i. learning both English and vernacular would allow them not to put emphasis on just one and hence forget the other.

j. learning both English and vernacular would allow the children to fit nicely into two societies, one a vernacular-speaking society, the other the English-speaking society.

k. it would not look good for children to learn a foreign language and forget their own. Therefore, if they learn English they must also learn vernacular.

l. as not all children proceed on to high school, it is good to learn their language along with English so that they could use it at home.

m. it would help people to communicate themselves in whatever dialects there are available in that particular language..

n. local or vernacular languages are being forgotten as people from younger generations borrow foreign words to replace their own. This happens because people do not know many words in their languages. It is also true that children must learn the language well to speak it well.

o. children do not know how to count in their own language.

p. many educated people (who are educated in English) do not express themselves well in their local languages. Therefore, it would be good to learn just vernacular because they would also be able to understand the concepts or ideas associated with their language.

q. children would be encouraged to have pride in their local language as something belonging to them.

r. children tend to use more English or Pidgin words in their vernacular languages even though there may be parallel words in their local languages. This is because they get their basic education in English and therefore they see the language as the only true and prestigious language.

s. learning both languages would improve self-expression and communication in children.

t. child could think deeply into what he/she is about to say/do.

## APPENDIX C

## SAMPLES FROM ACHIEVEMENT TESTS

### Part 1.

A Primer Reading (taken from Primer 5)

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| i | n | n | to | to |
| ita | nne | nno | tou | tou |
| itaka | | | toupo | toupu |
| | | | toupokua | toupupio |

Naisii Puipui aapu, "Uo, tuu toupokua itaka tee." Naisiie aapui, "Nne tou." Puipui tuu toupupoi pei. Puipui ta tuu toupuro tee itaka topoipui. Puipui Naisii itaka uukipu. Naisii Puipui itaka ntaipoipui.

B. Dictation

To aapei uo potakei piipio.

### Part 2.

New Reading

Nomunkeu muu iaro itegaro motourogaro Ugusie tee Napisi pemperimo ia Lupiau nkuriro aapuriro, Lupiau opuasi Kukutu noke kopiraa loipogi.

### Part 3.

Pidgin Reading

Na bikpela man i tokim mama,
"Ol manmeri i mas go nau."

## Buka Halia Test

### Part 1.

A Primer Reading (taken from Primer 1)

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ta | to | ta |
| tasa | tolo | tala |
| eTasa | itolo | etalasana |

E Tasa e lebana.
Nonei a tahol tere sola.
Nonei e talasena a ololo.
E Tal a pien tere Tasa.
Nonei e soate nama u lahoto tere Sola.
E soate namen tere Sola.

### B. Dictation

Nonei e la lala tere Olo.

### Part 2.

### Pidgin Reading

Na bikpela man i tokim mama,
"Ol manmeri i mas go nau."

# APPENDIX D

## RESULTS FROM ACHIEVEMENT TESTING

| BUIN 1 (LAITARO) SUBJECTS* | PART I correct words (HPS = 47) | comprehen Q's correct HPS = 3 | Time** 3 pts for rdng under s.h. avrge time; 0 if not | Dictation HPS-26 | Total Score HPS = 75 | % correct | PART II correct words read: NEW READING # | % | comprehension Q's correct HPS = 3 | PART III correct words read; Pidgin Reading: HPS-12 # | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. A (girl) | 45 | 3 | 3 | 26 | 77 | 97 | 19 | 100% | 3 | 10 | 83% |
| 2. A (boy) | 47 | 3 | 3 | 25 | 78 | 99% | 18 | 95% | 3 | 11 | 92% |
| 3. A (girl) | 47 | 3 | 3 | 25 | 78 | 99% | 19 | 100% | 3 | 10 | 83% |
| 4. B (girl) | 45 | 3 | 3 | 23 | 74 | 94% | 19 | 100% | 3 | 9 | 75% |
| 5. B (boy) | 47 | 3 | 3 | 26 | 79 | 100% | 19 | 100% | 3 | 9 | 75% |
| 6. B (boy) | 46 | 3 | 0 | 24 | 73 | 92% | 27 | 89% | 3 | 10 | 83% |
| 7. B (girl) | 46 | 3 | 0 | 24 | 73 | 92% | 19 | 100% | 3 | 11 | 92% |
| 8. C (Boy) | 37 | 3 | 0 | 23 | 63 | 80% | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø |
| 9. C (girl) | 30 | 3 | 0 | 16 | 49 | 62% | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø |
| BUIN 2 (IPIRAI) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1. A (boy) | 44 | 3 | 3 | 26 | 76 | 96% | 19 | 100% | 3 | (Ø) | (Ø) |
| 2. B (boy) | 46 | 3 | 0 | 21 | 70 | 89% | 15 | 79% | 3 | 9 | 75% |
| 3. B (boy) | 43 | 3 | 0 | 23 | 69 | 87% | 16 | 84% | 3 | 9 | 75% |
| 4. B (boy) | 47 | 3 | 3 | 25 | 78 | 99% | 19 | 100% | 3 | (Ø) | (Ø) |
| 5. B (boy) | 44 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 72 | 91% | 19 | 100% | 3 | (Ø) | (Ø) |
| 6. B (girl) | 46 | 3 | 3 | 24 | 76 | 96% | 19 | 100% | 3 | (Ø) | (Ø) |
| 7. C (girl) | 37 | 3 | 0 | 20 | 60 | 76% | 8 | 42% | 3 | (Ø) | (Ø) |
| 8. C (girl) | 8 | Ø | Ø | 5 | 13 | 16% | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø |
| 9. C (girl) | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø |

SYMBOL KEY

Ø = child's ability was below that needed to attempt this part of the test.

(Ø)= child was not tested on this part of the test due to time or other factors having nothing to do with the CHILD's ability.

*A = Top 1/3 of Class
B = Middle 1/3
C = Bottom 1/3

**Average time for Buin 1 (laitaro): 1 min 37sec.
Average time for Buin 2 (ipirai) : 1 min 21sec.

+HPS = Highest Possible Score

| BUKA (HANAHAN VTPS) SUBJECTS* | PART I corrects words read (HPS-49) | comprehension Q's answered (HPS-3) | Time ** 3 pts for reading under school avrg, 0 pts, if not | Dictation (HPS-23) | Total Score (HPS-78) | % Correct | PART 2 Correct words read: (HPS-12) | % |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. B (boy) | 45 | 3 | 3 | 21 | 72 | 92% | 72 | 58% |
| 2. B (boy) | 49 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 77 | 99% | 10 | 83% |
| 3. A (boy) | 46 | 3 | 0 | 22 | 71 | 91% | 9 | 75% |
| 4. C (boy) | 45 | 2 | 0 | 19 | 66 | 85% | 4 | 33% |
| 5. C (girl) | Ø | Ø | Ø | Ø | 0 | 0% | Ø | Ø |
| 6. C (boy) | 41 | 3 | 0 | 15 | 59 | 76% | Ø | Ø |
| 7. A (boy) | 49 | 2 | 3 | 22 | 76 | 97% | 12 | 100% |
| 8. B (Girl) | 46 | 3 | 3 | 22 | 74 | 95% | Ø | Ø |
| 9. A (boy) | 49 | 3 | 3 | 23 | 78 | 100% | 12 | 100% |

*A = Top 1/3 in class
B = Middle 1/3
C = Bottom 1/3

**Average time for Hanahan - 1 min 28 sec

SYMBOL - KEY:- Ø = child's ability was below that needed to attempt this part of the test.

(Ø) = child was not tested on this part of the test due to time or other factors having nothing to do with the CHILD's ability.

HPS = Highest possible Score.

# APPENDIX E

## MINUTES FROM POLICY MEETING WORKSHOP, AUGUST 1982*

### 1. TEACHERS

### A. Attendance

1.A.1. A teacher's time-book should be kept by the Headmaster of the community school paired to a VTPS.

1.A.2. In cases where a VTPS is not paired to a community school, the chairman of the Board of Management should keep a teachers' attendance book, who will do exactly as in 1.A.1.

1.A.3. Monthly report on teachers' attendance be sent to respective community governments, with recommendations from report writers of 1.A.1 and 1.A.2. on who would be entitled to deductions of salaries because of unnecessary absenteeism.

1.A.4. A copy of these recommendations should also be sent to the area Supervisor and the Coordinator.

1.A.5. The Community Government upon receipt of the 1.A.1 and 1.A.2. report and recommendations will action or not action according to its own judgement.

1.A.6. Recommended rate for fines: 50 toea half hour - K1 per hour etc.

### B. Corporal Punishment

1.B.1. Corporal punishment in VTPS is strictly forbidden.

1.B.2. Detentions for short periods (the longest is 30 minutes) is allowed.

*Attendance: Mr. L. Golu (Coordinator), R. Kaetavara (Teacher Trainer), J. Girana (Buka Supervisor), M. Nabuai (Buin Supervisor), L. Delpit, G. Kemelfield (Research and Evaluation)

1.B.3. In cases where teachers are accused of inflicting corporal punishment on a child, the BOM should refer the matter to the Supervisor for investigation. The Supervisor should report back to the BOM and will discuss his findings with the Board.

C. Misbehaviour

1.C.1. The BOM should write to the Community Government in cases of misbehaviour.

1.C.2. The Community Government should request a full investigation by the Supervisor.

1.C.3. The Supervisor should report back to the Community Government who will make a full report to the Coordinator's committee with their recommendation.

1.C.4. The Coordinator will approve or disapprove.

D. Professional Unsuitability for Teaching Young Children

1.D.1. Termination of Teacher's Service
This will be according to the judgement of the Coordinator and the Supervisor's judgement, after a certain number of supervisions have been given and the teacher has not shown much improvement.

2. CHILDREN

A. Attendance

2.A.1. No child can be dismissed for missing school.

2.A.2. No child should be dismissed from a VTPS for long absenteeism or misbehaviour.

2.A.3. A child who misses school for 6 months or more shall be able to repeat.

2.A.4. No repeats should be allowed except when the BOM considers the reason genuine e.g. long illness - father on transfer etc.

B. Entry Age/Grade One

Must a child first go through VTPS before entering Grade One? What about an over-age child?

2.B.1. All Children should go through VTPS go to Grade One. However, an over-age child should have the choice through his/her parents to: a) to do two years of VTPS, or b) do Grade One if there is a Grade One at the time.

2.B.2. No over-age child should go back to VTPS if he/she has gone through Grade One in community school.

2.B.3. The entry age into VTPS is 7 years - the child must turn 7 by March.

2.B.4. No under-age child should be enrolled at any VTPS.

## 3. GOVERNMENT RESPONSIBILITIES

3.A. Communities should be responsible for:

1. Buildings
2. Teachers, including teachers for cultural studies.

3.B. Provincial Government:

1. Basic school supplies
2. Teachers' salaries

## 4. S.I.L. PARTICIPATION

4.A. The S.I.L. should be responsible for assistance with:

1. Description of new languages
2. a) Language aspects of teacher training
   b) Appropriate technology - suitable for teacher training
   c) Preparation and production of books.

## 5. ESTABLISHMENT GRANT

5.A.1. The establishment grant should be abolished. It should be replaced by trust funds for Supervisors through district offices which will receive money from salary deductions.

## 6. CURRICULUM

### A. Science

Bring teachers together to brainstorm ideas on teaching science; look through Grade One syllabus.

B. Story Books

Involve community school teachers in writing stories. VTPS teachers to translate these into Language (mother tongue).

C. Reading

6.C.1. Some teachers are teaching through further lessons without children understanding what has been taught in earlier lessons.

6.C.2. Some teachers keep repeating the same book without evaluating children's learning or going on to the next book.

6.C.3. Some teachers are teaching plain reading and writing without using language games, freeplay games etc.

6.C.4. Some activities in year one should be repeated in year 2. (the most difficult ones.)

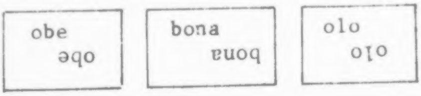
D. Reading Games

6.D.1. Concentration - Words e.g. na la te
no te na

6.D.2. Lotto games/Cover up games - syllables and vowels.

6.D.3. Make up words from syllables. $\boxed{se}\boxed{te}\boxed{le}$
(te le se)

6.D.4. Naluloto game - Turned upside down



E. Writing

6.E.1. Teachers have a hard time in teaching writing. Writing lessons are taking away from other lessons.
Recommend:
less time on writing and more time on other subjects.

All agreed to advise teachers on the matter. The best time is 15 minutes.

F. Free Play

6.F.1. Games should be children's choice with some suggested activities to do. Gogohe VTPS has a good set-up; nothing bought, children make wonderful structures of wood scraps, cans etc.

6.F.2. Old Minenda and Pacific Series books should be used for pictures for free-play games.

G. Cultural Activities

6.G.1. Take a day's absence from school to observe or do other cultural learning, participate in parental everyday activity.

6.G.2. Skip some of the week's work to save up time to take children to the village for a day, where feasting etc. is on.

H. Cultural Committee

6.H.1. District Cultural Committees should be encouraged.

6.H.2. School Cultural Committees should be formed, as a responsibility of the BOM.

7. TEACHER TRAINING

A. Tinputz Programme

The initial programme should be composed of:

3 weeks Methodology: Literacy
3 weeks Methodology: Pre-school
2 weeks Methodology: Classroom Preparation and Cultural Studies

B. Video Programme

A video programme should be prepared for teacher training with the following elements:

1. Cultural Studies
2. Reading and Writing
3. Maths - counting in tok ples - Sets/Pairs
4. Play and Games - Free Play

C. In-service

Themes should have the main emphasis:

1. Teaching outdoors
2. Inside the classroom - group organisation in different lessons
3. Games etc. for reading and maths
4. Play - free play, involving children's imagination
5. Story telling - different ideas

## 8. ADDRESS BY ACTING A/SECRETARY FOR EDUCATION MR. AARON RIGAMU (Tuesday 10 August):

VTPS is a very big project, and I now see it as a very important one. While relieving the Assistant Secretary I will have every chance to see more of VTPS.

The scheme has been publicised country-wide. Visitors to the VTPS Training Centre have been encouraged to start VTPS in their own provinces. However, they hesitate to start because of lack of advisors. This project was established by the wishes of the people of North Solomons Province. They demanded children to be taught their own language. It provides a great advantage to Grade One pupils who find it very easy to start community school. The establishment of VTPS has cut off many difficulties of children and teachers.

### Problems of VTPS

1. Money - materials - manpower - training
2. After the evaluation is completed, the government will give its decision on the scheme.
3. This is a commitment government has made.

### Commitment

I ask all of you to have commitment to the scheme. Tell teachers that we cannot solve their problems overnight.

### Visit Teachers

1. The trainer should pay monthly visits to schools. Children and teachers will feel secure if an interest is taken in them, and if they feel the work they are doing is important. This

team is the key to running the machinery of VTPS.

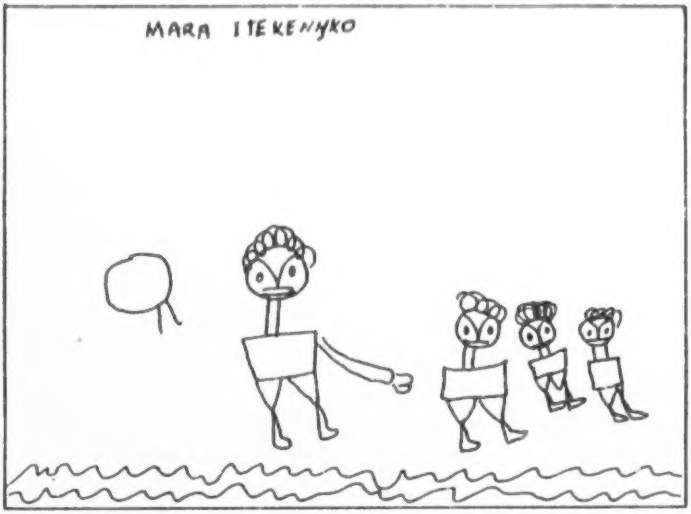
2. Office staff must pay official or courtesy visits to a VTPS. Teachers of VTPS are happy to see office staff present at their school.
3. The Coordinator should support the Supervisors.
4. Inspectors must be educated about the project. They must be encouraged to visit these schools. I give you my assurance that I will give very strong support to the VTPS scheme and all special projects.

(Extracted from minutes of the meeting)

# APPENDIX F

## SAMPLES OF CHILDREN'S WRITING
## LAITARA SCHOOL, BUIN

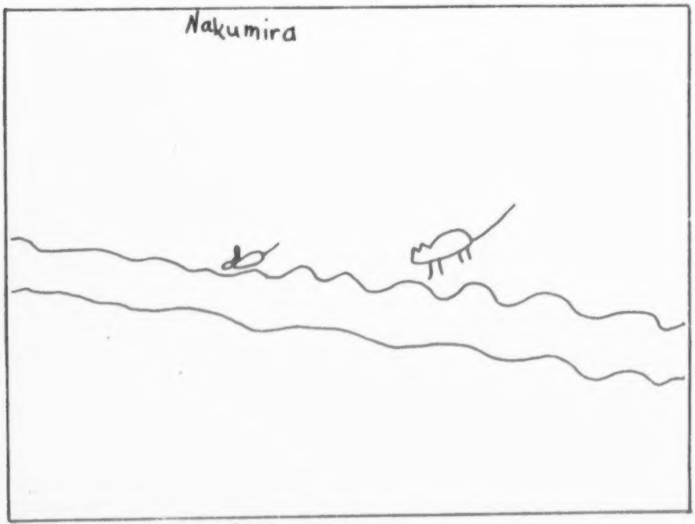
1. Paupake's Story



Paupake Tomitoŋ

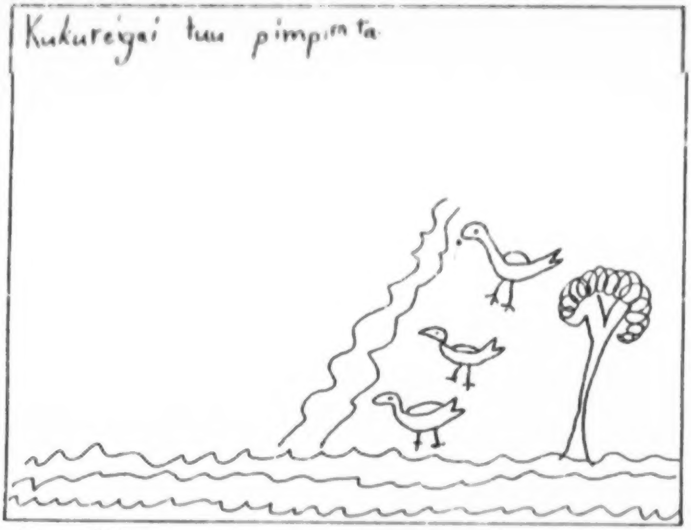
Nokegeremu iai Mara itekene aapuŋŋo, uŋna miŋno uumoŋ. Egu upiro uupoŋgu iai Mara Taipakakaŋno.

2. Nakumira's Story



Nakumira Kirogagi

Nogere igo maik·nagai tee aigau unu apakatoro upiro, egu ia maikuna niinu tuu iouro mokopacro loireipumo aguro agenne ia tuu paakee ama ituotopui. Egu tantaragumo ta ~~kaga komi~~ laga kamigai ŋkuro.


Kukureigai tuu pimpimta.

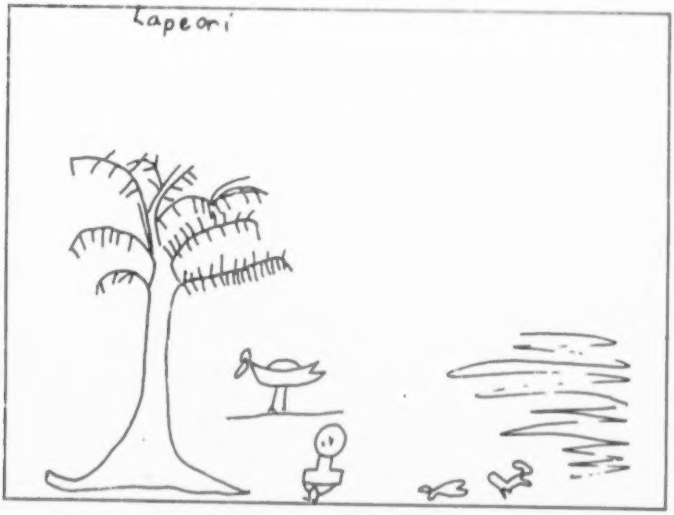
3. Paisi's Story

Moora Paisi

Namuytemuu ee kukureigai ia erau kopara la kagaro. Oiparo aga tuu soururo. Egu ia nao kiabeutamo agu ta tuu airam aga nao kiparo ako tu agu pinpintagu asigai kooroaro.

Iko tuu uigere kukureigaie airoure.

Egu katimi



4. Lapeori's Story

Lapeori lorugagi

Unimate ia ite asiga mignaga petaro. Ekoromo ikakatamaga tamo taitipugia. Egu marokoi baguro auru piotapuro, Egu aapigua, "auegumang Moa Kagua" aku tatokopoipuguo.

## Translations of the Stories

### Paubake's Story

One day a devil told the children, come, let's go and have a swim. Then they went for a swim and the devil ate the children all up.

### Nakumira's Story

One day some dogs went to a place where there was a feast. Then one of these dogs was thirsty, so he went down to the river and drank water and he said, "My goodness, what can be making this water taste so very good?" Then he looked around and what did he see but a dead possum rotting in the water.

### Paisi's Story

One day some chickens picked some breadfruit from a breadfruit tree and roasted them in the fire. They ate the breadfruit and became very thirsty, so they were scratching the earth to find water. They found water and they made it flow into the sea. So, in the beginning water was discovered by chickens. Now that is the end of the story.

### Lapeori's Story

A long time ago they left a child near the sea. When he felt hungry he would kill fish and eat them to live. Then an eagle took him into the air and the eagle sang to him, "Ave gumaru, mo koguro," and the boy clapped his hands.

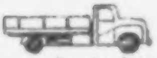
## APPENDIX G

Manahan VTPS Time-Table-Year I

| TIME | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 8:00-8:30 | Ass. Bible story & singing | Health & Science | Maths | Maths | Bible/Story singing |
| 8:30-9:00 | SP and Hearing | SP and Hearing | SP and Hearing | SP and Hearing | SP and Hearing |
| 9:00-9:30 | Picture & Free play | Creative Art | Picture & Free play | Creative Art | Creative Art |
| 9:30-10:00 | Seeing same & difference | Seeing same & difference | Seeing same & difference | Seeing same & difference | Seeing same & difference |
| 10:00-10:30 | | MORNING | RECESS | | |
| 10:30-11:00 | Pre-writing | Pre-writing | Pre-writing | Pre-writing | Pre-writing |
| 11:00-11:30 | Creative Art | Free play | Cultural Studies/Science | Out door games | Cultural Studies/Sc. |
| 11:30-12:00 | Singing & Outdoor | Picture time | Cultural Studies/Science | Singing | Cultural Studies/Sc. |
| 12:30 | | LUNCH | BREAK | | |

## APPENDIX H

## SAMPLE PAGE FROM PRE-PRIMER (HALIA)



Sake a ka te kato uana i iesana tara ka te kana tara ololo.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| ne | ti | ti | ne |
| pi | sa | pi | sa |
| ka | ka | mo | mo |
| ru | go | ru | go |

10

Sake a ka te kato uana i iesana.

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| mu | nu | nu | mu |
| li | gu | li | gu |
| tsi | ti | tsi | ti |
| be | be | ho | ho |
| nga | na | na | nga |

12

# APPENDIX I

## SAMPLE PAGE FROM TEACHERS' GUIDE (HALIA)

7.

1. Speaking and hearing. We are going to do a new kind of exer. This exer. is to hear sounds that are the same in the middle of words. This will be difficult. You may need to repeat each line several times before the CHN will get the correct answer.

   gehaba, eihana, lehana, nahala (ha)
   abasa, ebala, habahi, kabata (ba)
   beloso, gololo, haloso, maloto (lo)
   alaha, balata, golahe, kalana (la)

2. Seeing same and difference. Have the CHN play the syllable matching card games again.

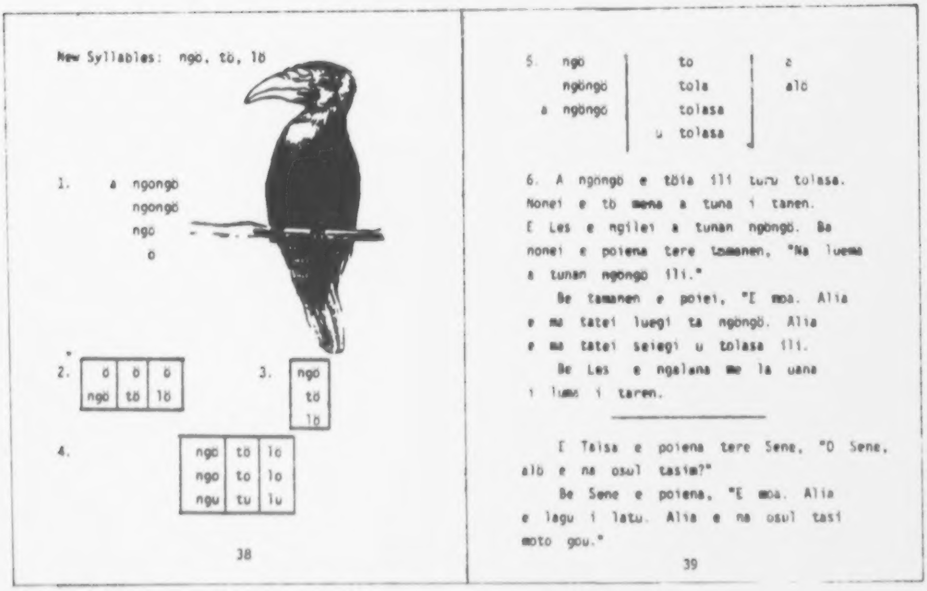
   Then have the CHN read the two sentences that you wrote on the BB yesterday and last Friday. Have the CHN take turns reading them. Sometimes you should point to the same one twice so that the CHN will not know that one always follows the other.

   Before class draw page 19 on the BB. Have the CHN take turns coming to the BB to point to two syllables in one clolo that are the same. Then have the CHN do pages 19, 20, and 21 in NIHAPITA 3.

3. Pre-writing. Put up the card that says a osono and have the CHN write it on their papers. Then open your NIHAPITA 1 T. Guide to page 15. Have the CHN do the exer. on pages 15 and 16.

# APPENDIX J

## SAMPLE PAGES FROM PRIMER (HALIA)



New Syllables: ngö, tö, lö

1. a ngongö
ngongö
ngö
ö

2.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ö | ö | ö |
| ngö | tö | lö |

3.

| |
|---|
| ngö |
| tö |
| lö |

4.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ngö | tö | lö |
| ngo | to | lo |
| ngu | tu | lu |

5.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ngö | to | a |
| ngöngö | tola | alö |
| a ngöngo | tolasa | |
| | u tolasa | |

6. A ngongö e töia ili turu tolasa. Nonei e tö mena a tuna i tanen. E Les e ngilei a tunan ngöngö. Be nonei e poiena tere tamanen, "Na luema a tunan ngöngo ili."

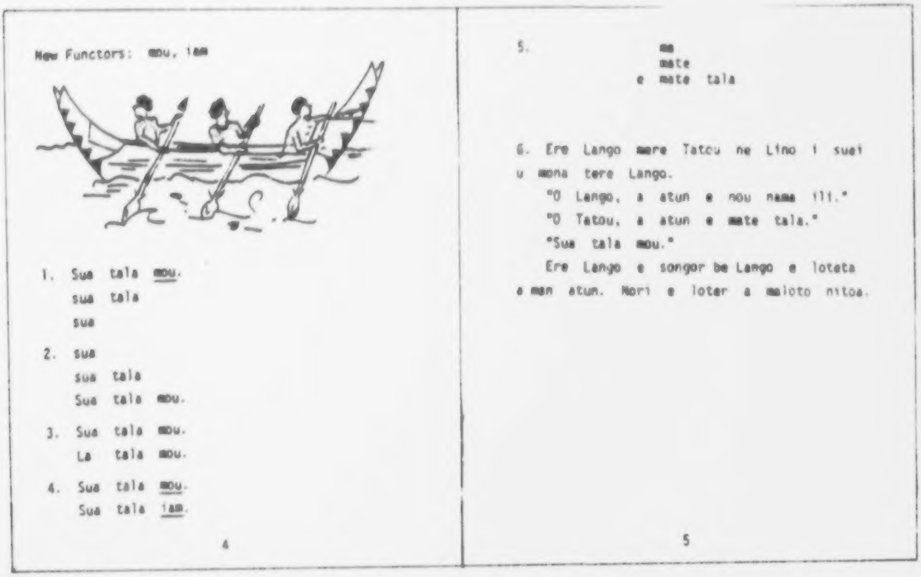
Be tamanen e poiei, "E moa. Alia e ma tatei luegi ta ngöngö. Alia e ma tatei seiegi u tolasa ili.

Be Les e ngalana me la uana i luma i taren.

---

E Taisa e poiena tere Sene, "O Sene, alö e na osul tasim?"

Be Sene e poiena, "E moa. Alia e lagu i latu. Alia e na osul tasi moto gou."



New Functors: mou, iam

1. Sua tala mou.
sua tala
sua

2. sua
sua tala
Sua tala mou.

3. Sua tala mou.
La tala mou.

4. Sua tala mou.
Sua tala iam.

5. ma
mate
e mate tala

6. Ere Lango mere Tatou ne Lino i suei u mona tere Lango.

"O Lango, a atun e nou nama ili."

"O Tatou, a atun e mate tala."

"Sua tala mou."

Ere Lango e songor be Lango e loteta a man atun. Nori e loter a maloto nitoa.

# APPENDIX K

## DESCRIPTION OF A CLASSROOM DAY IN BUKA AND BUIN SCHOOLS

### A BUKA SCHOOL

The following represents a day in the life of the Hanahan VTPS school during the second quarter of the school year:

**7:50** Children enter, open windows and prop them, sweep floors using brooms made from sago fronds. Teachers talk informally to each other, to John and to the children while they organize their papers for the day. Children and teachers drift toward their respective classrooms. There are 33 children in the Year One class and 27 in Year Two.

**Year Two**

**8:00** Students collect their small blackboards which they use alternately to sit on and to copy board work. Maria (teacher names are pseudonyms) leads them in a prayer after which they are seated on the floor.

**8:10** Religious Instruction

Maria reads a short story from the Halia Bible and then asks some of the children to answer questions about the story.

**8:30** Reading

Maria writes a primer story on the BB, one sentence at a time. After each sentence is written, one child is asked to read it in its entirety and then the class repeats the sentence. As the children read each sentence, Maria directs their attention to the punctuation marks. Because she must stop to write each sentence, the lesson takes a very halting pace and the children become fidgety and inattentive during the long pauses.

When the children misread a word, Maria has them wait while she reads the entire sentence again. There is a sing-song quality to the reading and there is considerable evidence that the children are memorizing the sentences rather than reading them - several of the children look away from the BB and continue reading.

Maria appears to be somewhat frustrated at the noise and inattention during the times she must stop to write the sentence on the BB. She raps the BB hard with the pointer she has been using to direct the children's reading and loudly commands the class to be quiet.

**9:15** Because the children have been seated for a long time, Maria asks them to stand and to jump up and down **maloto** (ten) times, then to touch their toes four times, next to clap their hands seven times, etc. There is a great deal of laughter as each tries to get it right. Good humor seems to have been restored on the part of both teacher and students.

**9:20** Mathematics

Children are seated again. (John is to give a demonstration lesson today on the traditional method of counting coconuts. These are counted either in groups of two - two coconuts twisted together and carried by hand or balanced on top of the head, or in groups of four two groups of two twisted together. There is a special name for the unit of two coconuts and another for the unit of four coconuts.) John asks four children to go outside and get two coconuts each from the coconut trees near the building.

After the coconuts are gathered John takes them to the front of the room and has the children count them. One child is asked to come to the front and tie the coconuts into sets of two. John gives the special word for this set and writes the word on the blackboard. Groups and individuals take turns counting the coconuts in pairs and taken apart in singles. Next John introduces the ideas of the set of four coconuts, gives the special name, and has different children practice the counting.

John asks the children to stand and put their mats away. He has them form a large circle and tells them that they are no longer children, but coconuts. They divide into groups of two and "tie" themselves together by joining hands. Next John calls out various numbers and children must regroup themselves accordingly into new circles. The children are laughing as they move about quickly trying to keep up with the fast pace of John's directions.

**10:00** Recess

Children retrieve the snacks wrapped in banana leaves they've brought from home and go outside in small groups, some to run after the few pigs roaming around or to join the community school children in their games, some to sit down and play games with small stones. John lights a fire in an ash can so, he says, the children may dispose of all rubbish and thus learn to respect their land and keep the village clean.

**10:30** Creative Arts

The children are divided into four groups, each of which is to draw different categories of things: things in the ocean; things on the road; things in the house; and things in the classroom. When the drawings are complete, Maria circulates among the children asking questions about the pictures.

**11:00** Writing

After all of the children have erased their BBs, the teacher writes a sentence from a past reading lesson on the BB and the children are asked to read it. After reading they are to copy the sentence with chalk as many times as they can neatly do so on their blackboards. The teacher circulates and comments on each child's work. Those who have finished draw pictures on their small BBs and talk amongst themselves.

**11:30** Singing/Cultural Studies

After the children once more stack their BBs, the boys are directed to get the hollow bamboo tubes used traditionally as musical instruments. These **tsigul** are either pounded vertically on the ground or laid horizontally and struck with sticks. The children appear to be delighted and quickly, with no direction from the teacher, move to their spaces, the boys at the front and sides of the room and the girls to the rear. The Year One children and teacher join them. They decide which song they would like to sing and the boys begin the percussion and singing. As the boys reach a certain point in the song, the girls, in two lines in the rear of the room, begin dancing. The words of the song and the dance movements are about finding shellfish on the reef, a dance often performed by adults at feasts. The children continue different songs and dances until dismissal.

(The singing and dancing are almost always led by nine-year-old Lahis. Lahis has had considerable academic and attention problems since he lost consciousness for a period of time after a near-fatal drowning accident. Nevertheless, he is a talented musician and John insists that he get due recognition for that skill. This is much in line with both the traditional Halia value of cooperation and the deeply held belief that everyone, no matter what his or her limitations, has a role to play in society.)

**12:00** Dismissal

The children clean the BBs, put away materials, and fasten windows. At the word from Maria, all move out of the classroom still singing some of the Halia songs.

## Year One

**8:00** Religious Instruction

After leading the children in a prayer, Audrey reads them a short Bible story from the Halia Bible. They discuss the story and then are asked to act it out, which they do with much enthusiasm.

**8:30** Speaking and Hearing

Audrey writes a sentence on the BB which the children had dictated the day before: **Nonei e gala lala i tasi.** (He went to the beach.) She asks the children to read the sentence, which they do very well. Audrey has also written this sentence on a cardboard strip, and several children are asked to bring the strip up to the front of the room and "match" it to the sentence written on the board.(The teachers' guide for this kind of lesson instructs the teacher to have several previously dictated sentences also on the BB so that the children must truly find the correct sentence and match it. Audrey has only written one sentence.)

**9:00** Mathematics

Audrey has the children practice counting by jumping, clapping, hopping, etc. the number of times she calls out. She then has the children run outside to collect a certain number of frangipani flowers each. They run back in, laughing and chattering.

She draws six circles around the room on the floor and puts a different number of flowers inside of each. The children are standing around the side of the room. They are called, four at a time, to run to the proper circle as the teacher calls out different numbers. Audrey changes the number of flowers in each circle and continues the game. There is considerable laughter as the children try to be the first to get to the proper circle.

**9:30** Seeing Same and Difference

The teacher writes a page from the children's books on the BB. She guides the pointer down each row to show the children how they must read the page. They seem to be confused because the lesson from the day before had them read horizontally and this new lesson has them read vertically. They are told that they must find the word that is different from the one at the top of each column. (The guidebook says they are to find the one which is the same.) Individuals come up to the front to point to the different syllable.

One child, who had also had difficulty the day before, does not answer correctly. The teacher picks up a piece of bamboo and a flower and asks him if they are the same. He does not appear able to answer. Audrey tells him the answer and then has him sit. Other children are called upon.

After each child has had a turn, Audrey passes out the pre-primers and the children attempt to do the same exercise in their small books. They are still to point to the one which is different, which means that the teacher must try to monitor 33 fingers pointing at small books.

**10:00** Recess

**10:30** Pre-Writing

Audrey passes out chalk and writes on the BB: **ng ng ng ng.** The children copy on their small slates. The teacher goes around giving individual assistance. Most of the children seem to copy the letters without too much difficulty, but some write the letters backwards, especially the g.

**11:00** Creative Arts

The children draw pictures on their small slates. Audrey circulates, discussing the pictures with each of the children, although she does most of the talking. Two children are asked to share their pictures with the group. They stand in front of the room and say a few sentences, answering additional questions of the teacher.

**11:30** Singing/Cultural Studies

The children join the Year Two class for a sing-sing.

**12:00** Dismissal

## A BUIN SCHOOL

VTPS day at Ipirai during the third quarter of the school year:

**7:50** The gong sounds for the start of the school day, and the community school and VTPS children who have been running and playing around the school yard move quickly to their respective classrooms. The 19 VTPS children present, nine girls and ten boys, enter still laughing and chattering until, after a stern word from Noupiri, they find their desks and stand quietly for morning devotions. Noupiri leads the prayer after which the children greet their teachers and are seated.

**8:00** Religious Instruction

Noupiri gives a rambling lecture on religion, touching on the birth of Jesus, Mary, Mother of God; and Christ's crucifixion. He ends the lecture with questions which sound as if they were learned in his own catechism days: "Who made us?" "Why did God make us?" and "Are all men on earth good?"

**8:06** Reading

Kepau starts by asking the class about a story read on the previous day, "Yesterday, what was in a hole?" The children answer in unison, "pig."

Kepau calls on one child to read the story written on the blackboard (BB). After he does so, then the entire class reads the story together. He has written new words on the BB which he now asks the children to read, first one syllable at a time and then the entire word. Almost all of the children seem to be able to read the words.

The class now reads a second story written on the board from which the new words were taken. The children are then asked to read the same story from the primer books which Kepau hands out. There are only enough books for each sex-segregated group of 3 or 4 children to share one. Each group is asked to read a sentence, after which the entire class re-reads the same sentence. This continues until the entire story is completed.

Kepau asks some questions about what has just been read. Individual children raise their hands to answer. While Kepau is conducting this phase of the lesson, Noupiri is writing some other questions about the story on the BB. He then takes over for the next segment of the reading lesson in which children are asked to write the answers to the questions on their slates. After the children finish writing, Noupiri asks the questions outloud which individual children answer. He then asks the children who have answered correctly on their slates to raise their hands. All but two hands go up.

**9:07** Listening Games

Noupiri plays a game that is the equivalent of "Simon Says" in which children stand up, sit down, touch their noses, etc. Then he has the children close their eyes and listen carefully. After he hits different things with a stick the children try to figure out what he has hit.

Next the children are asked to go outside in groups of three or four with a small BB for each group. They are to listen carefully for all the sounds around them and write down what they hear. The groups disperse throughout the school grounds and appear to be intently listening.

When the children return after about five minutes, each group has at least six things written on its BB. Some examples are:

**uini** (wind)
**ite** (child)
**sikinou** (bird)
**kukurei** (chicken)
**luukatu** (blackbird)
**kaapa** (iron roof)
**motokara** (car)
**kinri** (insect)
**parusi** (airplane)

Noupiri has the children share what they have written by propping all of the BBs up in front of the room. A member from each group reads that group's list. There is some discussion about the spelling of a few of the words, but most of them seem to be spelled correctly.

Noupiri singles out the word **uini** to discuss. This is a borrowed word from English which is now widely used. He explains to the children that the real tok ples name for wind is **taania** , which he writes on the BB.

**9:34** Mathematics

Kepau asks the children to bring their small BBs outside. They have been working on the traditional method of counting coconuts in groups. Each group of four is counted as one (**nomi**, one group of four; **kemiigo**, two groups of four; **paimio**, three groups of four, etc.). Noupiri says many of the children do not seem to understand, so this is a review lesson. The coconuts are laid out on the ground in groups and different children are asked to count them. After several children have had the opportunity to count, the children are asked to write down the number words for each group. There still appears to be some confusion as Kepau and Noupiri, themselves appearing somewhat frustrated, try to assist the children in their work.

**10:00** Recess

The children put their BBs back in the classroom and run outside again to play tag games, soccer, and jackstones.

**10:30** Roll Call

**10:35** Nature Study

Noupiri asks the children to go outside to find insects. They happily dash out and into the nearby cocoa grove. They return giggling and chattering with small creatures tucked inside their closed palms.

Noupiri asks them to count the legs on the insects they have collected. They are happily, busily, and noisily involved in doing so. They discuss the number of legs on the insects. Noupiri holds up one and asks who has one like it. They compare insects, give the names for them, and count the numbers of legs. They decide that all of them have the same number of legs except the spider, which has eight. Noupiri asks questions about the spider and its web which the children answer.

The children take the insects back outside and prepare for writing.

**11:00** Writing/Dictation

Kepau writes **n** on the BB and asks the children to read and write on their small slates. He then builds this syllable into **ngi** and **ngo** , each time asking the children to read and write the new word. He uses the same procedure to build **ngo** and **ngosi**. They review a page in the primer which uses these words and two additional sentences are written on the BB and read by the class.

Kepau erases the BB and dictates sentences to the children which they are to write on their BBs. There is a good bit of "sounding out" as well as erasing with hands and shirts to produce a neat copy as the children write the sentences. The children remember to add punctuation marks at the end. As the children work Noupiri and Kepau walk around when they are done. All but one of the children seems to be able to accomplish the task.

After each sentence is written the class is asked to read it, the correct sentence is written on the BB by the teacher, and children compare what they have written to the teacher's version.

The children stack their BBs in the corner, stand up and sit down a few times according to Kepau's directions in order to stretch and are told to retrieve their small bamboo **garamuts** which they have made at home from the back of the classroom and go outside.

**11:30** Cultural Studies

The children first play a few traditional games. **Siramai** (flying fox) is a game similar to the American "Duck, Duck, Goose" in which children form a circle, one child tags another and they both run to try to be the first to get to a particular position.

The children are learning to "hear" the **garamut** drums. There are patterns, based on the number of syllables and other aural clues, which designate for whom a message is intended. The boys take turns going into the bush and sending a message to a particular person. The other children listen and the person for whom the message is intended goes into the bush to answer the call. If the respondee is correct, he sends the next message. The boys seem to be very involved in the activity.

Because the **garamut** activity is for the boys, the girls are observers. They talk among themselves and play with wild grass fronds.

**12:00** Dismissal

As the gong sounds for the lunch period of the community school children, the VTPS children are dismissed by their teachers and dash off to play on the school grounds or head home.

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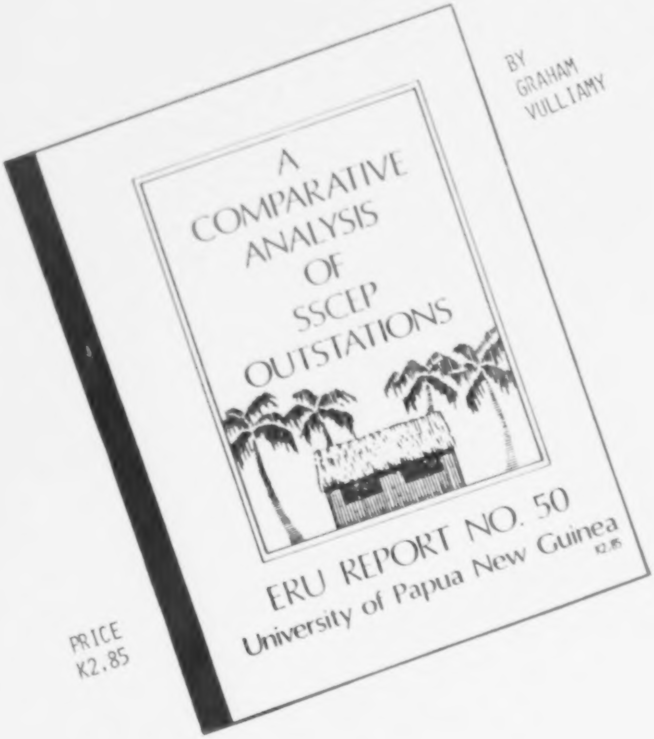

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